



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 94 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

7 January 2005

Śrī Saphalā Ekādaśī, 12 Nārāyaṇa, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,694

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THE PROCESS TO REALIZE ONE'S SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

In his book, *Bhajana-rahasya*, Thakur Bhaktivinode has described that the hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra consisting of sixteen names joined in eight pairs has been explained by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the eight verses of His Śikṣāṣṭaka. Bhaktivinode says that each verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka corresponds with a level of advancement in bhajan and bhakti, culminating in the realization of one's eternal spiritual form.



*chaya śloka bhajite anartha dūre gela
tabe jāna siddha-dehe adhikāra haila*

*adhikāra nā labhiyā siddha-deha bhāve
viparyaya buddhi janme śaktira abhāve*

By the time one reaches the level of the sixth verse [of the Śikṣāṣṭaka prayers, which Bhaktivinode describes as relating to the platform of *bhāva*], one's contaminations have mostly disappeared, and one therefore has the right to worship in one's *siddha-deha*. If anyone tries to meditate on his spiritual body without having this qualification, his intelligence will be turned upside-down due to his lack of strength. (Śrī Bhajana-rahasya 1.10.9-10)

*śraddhā kari nāma bhaje sādhu-kṛpā pāñā
itare virāga nitya svarūpa bujhiyā*

*ihāke-i bali bhakti-yoga anuttama
bhakti-yoge-sarva-siddhi yadi dhare krama*

One who engages faithfully in the worship of the holy name and thus attains the mercy of a sādhu becomes indifferent to other things and comes to understand his eternal identity (*nitya svarūpa*). This is called *bhakti-yoga* in its highest form. One can attain all perfections if one follows the process in its proper sequence. (Śrī Bhajana-rahasya 2.14.1-2)

*ataeva nāma mātra vaiṣṇavera dharma
name prasphuṭita haya rūpa, guṇa, karma*

The holy name is the only dharma accepted by *vaiṣṇavas*. From the holy name blossoms form, qualities and activities. (Śrī Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi 1.30)

*premera kalikā nāma, adbhuta rasera dhāma,
hena bala karaye prakāśa
īṣat vikaśi' punaḥ, dekhāya nija-rūpa-guna,
citta hari' laya kṛṣṇa-pāśa*

*pūrṇa vikaśita hañā, braje more jāya lañā,
dekhāya more svarūpa-vilāsa
more siddha deha diyā, kṛṣṇa-pāśe rākhe giyā,
e dehera kare sarva-nāśa*

The holy name is the bud of the flower of divine love, and is the very abode of astonishing mellows. Such is the power He manifests that when His holy name starts to blossom a little further, it then reveals His own divine form and qualities. Thus my heart is abducted and taken directly to Krishna.

Blossoming fully, the flower of the holy name takes me to Vraja and reveals to me His own love-dalliance. This name gives to me my own eternal spiritual body, keeps me right by Krishna's side, and completely destroys everything related to this mortal frame of mine. (*Śaraṇāgati*, *Śrī Nāma-māhātmya*. Also cited in *Jaiva Dharma*, chapter twenty-five.) ❧

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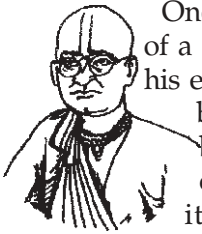
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WHO CAN TOUCH A SANNYASI'S FEET?

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*



One should not touch the lotus feet of a saintly person or *sannyāsī* with his enjoyment-prone body or sinful body. If the saintly person becomes displeased because of our touching his lotus feet, then it will certainly create inauspiciousness for us. *Sannyāsī* devotees do not like people touching their feet. It has currently become a fashion — a disease — to touch the lotus feet of guru and *sādhū*. We should pay close attention to whether the spiritual master and Krishna are being pleased by each one of our actions. If we do not do so, then we will dig our own grave.

Let me tell those who, under the control of their emotions, attempt to touch the feet of a *sannyāsī* like me. In the language of my spiritual master, "Why should they dare to stretch their hands to take dust from the feet of the saintly persons? Is such boldness proper? What qualification do they have? What right?"

An attached householder, who has no real interest in serving the saint, is certainly unjustified in touching his lotus feet. Better that we offer one another obeisances from a distance. If an attached householder forcibly tries to touch the saint's feet, it means his mind is attracted to gross matter. That will cause him more harm than good. Those who desire fortune should carefully refrain from committing such offensive activities. ❧

— *Amṛta Vani*, p. 261. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004

PREACHERS AND FOOT-TOUCHING

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

Cc. ādi 17.243-245

One day [in the House of Srivas Thakur] when Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had finished His dancing, a woman, the wife of a *brāhmaṇa*, came there and caught hold of His lotus feet again and again, the Lord became unlimitedly unhappy.

PURPORT



This holding of a great personality's lotus feet is certainly very good for the person who takes the dust, but this example of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's unhappiness indicates that a *vaiṣṇava* should not allow anyone to take dust from his feet.

One who takes the dust of a great personality's lotus feet transfers his sinful activities to that great personality. Unless the person whose dust is taken is very strong, he must suffer the sinful activities of the person who takes the dust. Therefore, ordinarily it should not be allowed. Sometimes in big meetings people come to take the same advantage by touching our feet. On account of this, sometimes we have to suffer from some disease. As far as possible, no outsider should be allowed to touch one's feet to take dust from them. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu personally showed this by His example, as explained in the next verse.

Immediately He ran to the river Ganges and jumped in to counteract the sinful activities of that woman. Lord Nityananda and Haridasa Thakur caught Him and raised Him from the river.

PURPORT

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is God Himself, but He was playing the part of a preacher. Every preacher should know that being allowed to touch a *vaiṣṇava*'s feet and take dust may be good for the person who takes it, but it is not good for the person

who allows it to be taken. As far as possible, this practice should ordinarily be avoided. Only initiated disciples should be allowed to take this advantage, not others. Those who are full of sinful activities should generally be avoided.

Letter of 11 April 1970

You do not allow anyone to touch your feet — this is a very good attitude — but if they want to insist on touching your feet and there is no other way to avoid it, you can simply remember your predecessor *ācāryas* and spiritual masters and accept them and return *namaskāra* with folded hands. That is the *vaiṣṇava* etiquette. ❧

APPROACH A PREMI BHAKTA

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Who is a real *sādhū*? A real *sādhū* is completely surrendered unto Krishna. He has no other desire than to serve Krishna with pure love, twenty-four hours, day and night, *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam*. One who has gotten *prema-bhakti*, who has gotten Krishna, is a real *sādhū*. One should accept such a *sādhū*, then he can approach Krishna. One cannot approach directly. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 19.151) states:

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja

This is Mahāprabhu's teaching to Sanatan Goswami: After undergoing *lakhs* and *lakhs* of species of life, through *lakhs* and *lakhs* of universes, if someone is *bhāgyavān*, fortunate, he gets the mercy of Krishna and guru, and the seed of *bhakti* is sown in his heart.

This word *bhāgyavān*, fortunate, is significant. What is genuine good fortune? That person who meets guru, the bona-fide representative of Krishna, is fortunate. Only one who has gotten Krishna, who has bound up Krishna in his heart, only he can make Krishna appear in the heart of his devoted disciple. No one else can give you Krishna. If someone has not gotten, how can he give? If you have one dollar, you can give fifty cents, sixty cents or one dollar. But if you don't have, then how can you give?

Similarly, we should approach someone who has obtained Krishna, who has developed *prema-bhakti* and has bound up Krishna in his heart. Srila Thakur Bhaktivinoda has written (*Śaraṇāgati*, *Bhajana-lālasā*, song 7):

kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāra
tomāra śakati āche
āmi to' kāṅgāla, kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa bali',
dhāi tava pāche pāche

O *vaiṣṇava* *ṭhākura*, Krishna belongs to you because you have bound Him up in your heart by the rope of *prema*. Only you can give me Krishna because you have gotten Him. I am *kāṅgāla*, a pauper. I am bereft of Krishna. So I am running behind you begging your causeless mercy, "Please give me Krishna! Please give me Krishna."

Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.23) says:

nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātmā viorṇute tanūm svām

One may hear *pravacanas*, lectures, from so many persons, but if they are not realized souls, if they have not gotten Krishna, not developed *prema-bhakti*, one will not be able to understand this *paramārtha-tattva*, this supreme goal. One cannot understand this *tattva* by dint of his merit, scholarship, or intelligence. It can be understood only by one who is always crying in his heart, "Oh Krishna, how can I know You? How can I approach You?" Krishna is there in the heart. He understands, "This soul is crying for Me." So He arranges for that person to meet a bona-fide guru who can give him Krishna, who can teach him about *kṛṣṇa-tattva*. That dear devotee, who is Krishna's bona fide representative, is the manifestation of *paramātmā*. That is *guru-tattva*. *Paramātmā* only manifests Himself as guru before a person who is crying for Krishna in his heart. "How can I get Krishna? How can I approach Krishna? How can I serve Krishna? Without Krishna's dear devotee, His representative the guru, I cannot do so. I don't know who is guru. I am a conditioned soul having four defects. I cannot recognize such a person with my

defective senses. But Krishna, You know who is Your dear devotee. Unless You help me, how can I come to You?" This is the prayer to be offered to Krishna. By Krishna's mercy, one will meet such a guru who is Krishna's dear devotee and bona fide representative. Take shelter of him and completely surrender — *gurupādāśraya dīkṣā*. As *Gītā* says, *praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā* — serve him, please him, satisfy him, and then humbly ask questions relating to *tattva*. By his causeless mercy, he will impart *tattva-jñāna*. This is the process. Take shelter of him and do *bhajana* under his guidance.

You don't know how to do *bhajana*. Krishna is the *bhajanīya-vastu*, the worshipable object. Guru will teach you how to serve Krishna, how to surrender unto His lotus feet, how to please Him. He will teach you by his own example, not theoretically. Under his guidance, you will do *sādhana, bhajana*. Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*madhya* 22.25) states:

*tāte kṛṣṇa bhaje kare gurura sevana
māyā-jāla chuṭe, pāya kṛṣṇera caraṇa*

If the conditioned soul engages in the service of the Lord and simultaneously carries out the orders of his spiritual master and serves him,



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

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Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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he can get out of the clutches of *māyā* and become eligible for shelter at Krishna's lotus feet.

Heavy Responsibility

Such a guru, who is a bona-fide representative of Krishna, has come down from Krishna's abode. There is a *prema-bhakti-sūtra*. *Sūtra* means "rope" or "thread". One end of the *prema-bhakti-sūtra* is attached to the lotus feet of Krishna in Goloka Vrindavan. The guru has come with the other end of that rope here. The conditioned souls, fallen in the deep, dark well of material existence, are suffering. Such a guru is outside the well. He's not under the grip of *māyā*. He throws his end of the rope to the conditioned souls in the dark well of material existence and says, "Clasp it very tightly." Then he pulls you up. This is the process. The guru does this. It is not an easy affair to deliver even one conditioned soul from the fort of *māyā*. The guru has to spend gallons and gallons of spiritual blood to deliver just one soul. It is a heavy responsibility. If even one conditioned soul is delivered, the guru feels so much happiness.

It is a reciprocal affair. It is not one-sided. You should clasp the end of the rope very tightly. That means you should follow the guru's instruction as it is. Don't twist it. Don't add any of your deliberation to it. Whatever he says, just do exactly that. He gives some "do's" and some "don'ts". You must strictly follow his instructions. Don't be lazy. Then the guru will pull you up. Otherwise, if you are not serious, if you are lazy, careless, or superfluous, you will never accept guru's instruction. Or you half accept it and half reject it. You add your own deliberations and twist it. Then you cannot be helped. If you are very serious, very strict, then guru will pull you up. That is his duty. Otherwise, guru may lift you up, then you deviate or become lenient and then you again fall down. Seeing this, the guru feels great pain in his heart, "I spent so many gallons of blood to deliver him, but this fellow didn't follow, so he fell down." To deliver just one soul from *māyā's* fortress is a very difficult task. It is a heavy responsibility. This is guru. ॐ

— Excerpted from chapter seven of "The Process of Inquiry". Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India. 1998.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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21 January 2005 Śrī Putradā Ekādaśī, 26 Nārāyaṇa, 518 Gaurābda Circulation 1,701

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ADDRESS EVERY WOMAN AS MOTHER

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



From five years old, if a child is trained to call all women as mother, then naturally his culture is different. ... This was the practice. Not only religiously, but morally. It is so good, to look upon all women as mother. That is the

system still in India, any unknown woman who has no introduction with you, she is addressed with "mātājī". She may be just like a daughter or a granddaughter, but still, as a respect to the woman, one would address her as mother, "mātājī". This is the Indian system. Now some rascals have introduced "bhaginījī", "sister". But that is not śāstric. In the śāstra, all women except one's wife should be addressed as mother.

(Lecture in Los Angeles. 7 January 1974)

Any woman except one's wife is mother. It doesn't matter whether she is elderly or young. Still in India, one can address any unknown woman with "mother". The first relationship is mother. Now they have introduced "sister", "bahinjī". No, that is not Vedic etiquette. No "bahinjī". We should learn this. Except for one's one wife, all women should be addressed as "mother". This is civilization. Then there will be no corrupt relations. If from the very beginning, you establish your relationship with

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other women as mother, then there is no question of another relationship.

(Lecture in Los Angeles. 13 July 1974)

One of the qualifications one must have to be considered a learned scholar is *māṭṛvat para-dāreṣu* — all women should be treated as mother. Nowadays it has been introduced in India, "bahinjī". No. This is not the etiquette. The etiquette is to address every woman, never mind whether she is young or old, as mother. This is *brahmacārī*.

(Lecture in Bombay. 5 April 1974)

All women should be treated just like mother. Not like the present society. Formerly, every woman was addressed as mother, "mātājī". And now they have invented "bahinjī". No. Woman should be addressed as mother. *Māṭṛvat para-dāreṣu*.

(Lecture in Vrindavan. 6 August 1974)

At the present moment, they have invented the word "bahinjī", "sister". No. In the Vedic culture there is no such thing as "sister". "Mother" — that is Vedic culture. Any woman is called "mother", because mother is always respected. The *brahmacārī* would go to the householder's house and address the ladies, "Mother, give us some alms." So from the childhood, a *brahmacārī* is trained to address all women as mother. Therefore, when they are young they cannot see women in any other way. This is Vedic culture.

(Lecture in Mayapura. 4 October 1974)



Mātṛvat para-dāreṣu — one should see all women as mother. But in this age, there is no education. Therefore, practically everyone is a *mūḍha*, not educated. He does not know how to look upon women. Woman should be looked upon as mother. ... In Northern India, they have introduced “*bahinjī*”. No, this is not the etiquette. One should say, “*mātājī*”. This is Indian culture, not “*bahinjī*”.

(Lecture in Mayapura. 16 February 1976) ❧

A CONSTITUTIONAL INJUNCTION FOR EVERY BIRTH

From *Sri Bhaktyāloka*

By *Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode*



Aspiring devotees should first take shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide guru. Without taking shelter of a guru, one cannot achieve anything auspicious. There are two types of people — one having developed intelligence and one having undeveloped intelligence. Those whose intelligence is undeveloped are absorbed in the so-called happiness of this world. If by chance they get the association of a *mahājana*, then they also become intelligent. They consider, “How unfortunate I am! I’m always engaged in sense gratification. I’m passing my days hankering for material enjoyment.” This initial association with a great soul is also called association with the guru by hearing. By acquired good fortune, at this time faith is awakened. When faith is awakened, one endeavors for devotional service. Then it is essential for one to take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru. In this way by the influence of ones previous good works, performed knowingly or unknowingly, persons with undeveloped intelligence become intelligent and take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru.

What type of guru one should take shelter of is explained in the *śāstras*: Someone who has conquered the six enemies beginning with lust, who is pure, who performs devotional service on the path of *rāga*, who is *brahminical*, who knows the clear path of the Vedas, whom *sādhus* can respect as guru, who is able to control the senses, who is merciful to all living entities, who is cultured, who is without duplicity, and who is truthful — such a householder is fit to be accepted as guru. All these qualities are considered in two ways. The principal quality of a

guru is attachment to Krishna and detachment for what is not related with Krishna. All other qualities are secondary. That is why Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has said in the *Chaitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 8.127):

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei ‘guru’ haya*

Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī*, or a *śūdra* — regardless of what he is — he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Krishna.

If one possesses this principal symptom of a guru, then he is eligible to be guru, even though he lacks one or two secondary symptoms. Being a *brāhmaṇa* and being a householder are counted as secondary symptoms. It is good if a person possesses these two secondary symptoms along with the principal qualification. But those who are defective in the principal symptom are unqualified to be guru, even though they possess the other two. As stated in *Padma Purāṇa*:

*mahābhāgavata śreṣṭho brāhmaṇo vai gurur nṛṇāṃ
sarveṣāṃ eva lokānāṃ asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ*

*mahākula-prasūto ‘pi sarva yajñeṣu dīkṣitah
sahasra-śākhā-dhyāyī ca na guruḥ syād avaiṣṇavaḥ*

Among all human beings, the *brāhmaṇa* who is a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or great devotee, is topmost and qualified as guru. He is as worshipable as Lord Hari. A non *vaiṣṇava* is never fit to be guru, even if he has taken birth in a great family, performed all sacrifices, and studied many branches of the Vedas.

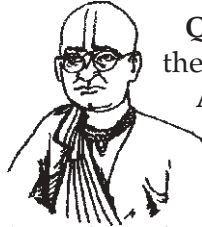
After finding a qualified guru, a faithful disciple should serve him with firm conviction and without duplicity. After pleasing the guru, one should accept initiation and *kṛṣṇa-mantra*. Those who are averse to taking initiation and only make a drama of *kaṭa-kīrtana*, duplicitous chanting, while advertising themselves as *vaiṣṇavas* certainly cheat themselves. It is not the duty of materialistic persons to renounce the process of initiation because a few great souls like Jada Bharata did not take initiation. Initiation is a constitutional injunction for every birth of the living entity. If initiation is not seen in the life of a perfected soul, it should not be taken as an example. General rules are not changed because something happens to a particular person in a special situation. Sri Dhruva Maharaja went to Dhruvaloka in his material body — seeing that, should one waste time hoping for the same? The general rule is a living entity gives up his material body and goes to Vaikuntha in his spiritual body. General rules should be accepted

by people in general. Whenever and whatever is desired by the Lord, who is full of inconceivable potencies, only that happens. Therefore, we should never transgress the general rules. After pleasing the guru by serving him without duplicity, one should receive from him instructions on the absolute truth and initiation into the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. ❀

— From *Śrī Bhaktyāloka* pages 83-84. Translated by Sri Bhumiapati Das. Edited and Published by Sri Pundarik Vidyānidhi Das, Vrajraj Press. Vrindavan. 1996

SIN AND OFFENSE

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*



Question: Are sin and offense the same?

Answer: No. One commits sin by disobeying the rules of society, but one commits offense by showing disrespect to the lotus feet of Vishnu and *vaiṣṇava*. Offense is a million times more dangerous than sin. Sin can be destroyed by atonement, but offense cannot be destroyed that way. Only by taking the all-beneficial names of Sri Sri Gaura-Nityānanda, the friends of the fallen, can one make offense go away. ❀

— From *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene Oregon. 1997.

PASTIMES IN THE EARLY MORNING

Sanat-kumāra Saṁhitā 36.202-219

The Sanat-kumār Saṁhitā is an ancient literature that is quoted by many of our ācāryas. Today only chapters thirty-six and fifty-five are known to exist. Chapter fifty-five narrates Krishna's replies to Rukmini Devi when she asked Him to describe His Vrindavan pastimes. Chapter thirty-six consists of a conversation between Narada Muni and Lord Sadashiva discussing concern for the suffering of the living entities in Kali Yuga, meditation on Krishna, the process of worship of the Lord's eternal associates, and bhajan in servitorship. At the end of the chapter, Vrinda Devi describes Krishna's daily pastimes.

Vrinda Devi spoke as follows: "Wakened by His mother in the early morning, Krishna rises from bed. He and Balaram brush Their teeth, and with His mother's permission, Krishna eagerly goes to the cowshed to milk the cows.

"Wakened by Her *gopī* companions, Sri Radha also rises from Her bed. She brushes Her teeth with a twig and Her *sakhīs* massage Her with

fragrant oils. Then She goes to the bathing-room where Lalita and other *gopīs* give Her a divine bath. Next, She enters the decorating-room, where Her friends adorn Her with garlands, scents, oils, and many glittering ornaments. Then, after first taking permission from Radha's mother-in-law, Yasoda calls Radha and Her friends to cook breakfast for Krishna."

Hearing this, Narada Muni asked, "O goddess, why does Yasoda call Radha to cook when Rohini and so many other expert cooks are present in her home?"

Vrinda Devi replied, "The great sage Durvasa gave Radha a boon that She would be the best of cooks. This I heard from the mouth of Katyayani:

*tvayā yat pacyate devi tad-annam mad-anugrahāt
miṣṭam svādv-āmṛta-spardhi bhoktur āyus-karam tathā*

[Durvasa said to Radha:] O goddess, by my mercy, whatever You cook will be more delicious than the nectar of the gods. It will increase the life of whoever eats it. (Text 209)

"Thus Yasoda calls Radha to cook every day. Yasoda thinks, 'Eager to eat this delicious food, my son will live a very long life.'

"Receiving permission from Her mother-in-law, Radha becomes very happy. Accompanied by a host of friends, She goes to Krishna's home to cook.

"Meanwhile, Krishna milked some cows and had some other boys milk the others. Then, called by His father, He and His friends return home. There the servants happily massage Krishna, bathe Him, dress Him in clean garments, garland Him, and anoint His body with sandalwood paste. Decorating His forehead and cascading down onto His neck and shoulders, Krishna's curling black hair shines brilliantly. The servants make the moon of His forehead splendid with *tilaka*. Krishna wears jeweled armlets and bracelets on His wrists and His hands are adorned with jeweled rings. He wears a brilliant pearl necklace across His chest and dazzling shark-shaped earrings dangle from His ears.

"Called again and again by His mother, holding the hand of one of His friends, Krishna follows Balaram into the breakfast-room. There, seated with His friends, He eats a breakfast feast of many different kinds of foodstuffs. He makes many jokes with His friends, and they all laugh together. The servants bring betelnuts. After sharing them with

His friends and chewing some Himself, Krishna rests for a moment on a splendid bed.

“While Krishna enjoys His pastime of eating breakfast, Radha watches. Afterwards, when Yasoda calls, Radha, accompanied by Lalita and other *gopī* friends, shyly have Their breakfast.” ❀

— *Sanat-kumāra Samhitā*. English translation by Sri Kusakratha Das. The Krishna Library, Culver City, California.

— *Sanat-kumāra Samhitā*. Published by Sri Haridas Sastri. Vrindavan. 1997. Sanskrit

PRAYER TO THE VAISHNAVAS

Sri Radha Mohan Das

In A History of Brajabuli Literature, the Bengali scholar Sukumar Sen writes:

Radha Mohan was a great-grandson of Srinivas Acharya. He was born sometime about 1699 A.D. and died in 1778. Radha Mohan was one of the greatest vaiṣṇava scholars of his time. When he was a young man, there arose an acute doctrinal difference between two schools of vaiṣṇava thought. One school supported the doctrine of *svakīyā* [That the highest attainment in the conjugal mellow is experienced when the beloved relates to Krishna as her husband.] and the other the doctrine of *parakīyā* [That the highest attainment is experienced when the beloved relates to Krishna as her paramour.]. This controversy came to such a head that an assembly of all the leading vaiṣṇavas was called, and the leaders of the two



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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schools were asked to discuss their doctrines publicly and to accept the judgment of the assembly. Radha Mohan was chosen as the leader of the parakīyā school. After a protracted and lively discussion, Radha Mohan vindicated the doctrine of his school, and was given a certificate to that effect, signed by all the vaiṣṇava scholars present. This document was registered at the court of Murshidkuli Khan in March 1718. Radha Mohan lived at Malihati, a village a few miles distant from Katwa. He was the guru of Maharaja Nandakumar. Radha Mohan's great work is the Padāmṛta-samudra, an anthology of 730 vaiṣṇava lyric poems, of which 185 belong to himself.

(Dhānāśī-rāga)

*sakala vaiṣṇava gosāi dayā kara more
dante tṛṇa dhari kahe e dīna pāmāre*

O saintly vaiṣṇavas, please be merciful to me! Holding a blade of grass in his teeth, a poor wretch speaks as follows:

*śrī-guru-caraṇa āra śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya
pāda-padma pāoyāiyā more kara dhanya*

Please give me the great treasure of the attainment of shelter at the feet of the spiritual master and Sri Krishna Chaitanya.

*tomā sabāra karuṇā vinā iha prāpti naya
viśeṣe ayogyā muṇi kahila nīścaya*

Without the mercy of all of you, reaching such a goal is not possible. I speak of my disqualifications with certainty.

*vāñchā-kalpa-taru hao karuṇā-sāgara
ei ta bharasā muṇi dhari ye antara*

You are all wish-fulfilling desire trees and oceans of mercy. I have that faith in my heart.

*guṇa leśa nāhi mora aparādhera sīmā
āmā uddhāriyā loke dekhāo mahimā*

I have not even a trace of any valuable quality, and I have reached the limit of offensiveness. In my deliverance, the world will understand your glories.

*nāma-saṅkīrtana ruci āra prema-dhana
e rādhā-mohane deha ha-iyā sa-karuṇa*

Therefore, please kindly give to this Radha Mohan Das the gift of taste for the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names and the great treasure of ecstatic spiritual love. ❀

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— Sukumar Sen. *A History of Brajabuli Literature*. University of Calcutta. Calcutta. 1935.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 96 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

5 February 2005

Śrī Ṣaṭ-ṭilā Ekādaśī, 11 Madhava, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,705

Highlights

• FORBIDDEN TO WEAR TILAK

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• TWICE BORN INITIATES SHOULD ALWAYS WEAR TILAKA

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur's Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata, ādi-khaṇḍa 15.5-15

• A SYMBOL OF UNSHAKEABLE FAITH

FORBIDDEN TO WEAR TILAK

From a story told by
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada



There was once a factory in India where all the workers were Hindus and mostly *vaiṣṇavas*. The *vaiṣṇavas* had freedom, therefore, to wear their *vaiṣṇava* tilaka to work, and they also displayed other *vaiṣṇava* paraphernalia.

After some time, however, the factory went to new management and the new proprietor was a Muslim. On taking over the business, the Muslim owner declared that he would no longer allow the workers to come to work wearing *vaiṣṇava* tilaka. Most of the workers obeyed, and on the given date announced by the owner, they appeared at the factory without their tilaka. One employee, however, thought that he would take his chances and depend on Kṛṣṇa, so he went to work wearing very clear, white, *vaiṣṇava* tilaka. After seeing all the workers assembled, the new Muslim proprietor said, "This one devotee who has worn *vaiṣṇava* tilaka is very courageous. He may be permitted to continue wearing the tilaka to work, but all others are forbidden to wear it any more."

In this way, Prabhupada encouraged the devotees to not unnecessarily abandon the markings of a *vaiṣṇava*. Where situations forbid it, Prabhupada said that it was not absolutely necessary to wear tilaka, although

a devotee should at least put water tilaka on his body in the morning and consecrate his body with the names of Vishnu. But if the paraphernalia is permitted, then a devotee should not unnecessarily do away with the dress or beads of a *vaiṣṇava*. ❧

— Srila Prabhupada Nectar, chapter 3, number 6. Satsvarup Das Goswami. Gita Nagari Press. 2003.

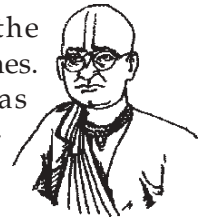
TWICE BORN INITIATES SHOULD ALWAYS WEAR TILAKA

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With Purports of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

TEXTS 5-8

Mukunda Sanjaya was the Lord's servant for many lifetimes.

His son was known as Purushottam Das. Gaurachandra daily went to teach at the house of this fortunate



person. The Lord arrived first and sat in the *caṇḍī-maṇḍapa*. Thereafter the students would gradually arrive there. During this period, sometimes by chance a student would forget to mark his forehead with tilaka.

PURPORT

The word *tilaka* refers to when a person who is initiated as a *vaiṣṇava* marks twelve parts of his body above the waist — his forehead, stomach, chest, throat, right waist, right arm, right shoulder, left waist, left arm, left shoulder, upper back, and lower back — as

temples of Hari, with *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*, two vertical lines. The forehead is one of these twelve places. In the *Nārada Purāṇa* it is stated: “A *vaiṣṇava* who marks his forehead with *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* immediately purifies the entire world.” The devotees of Vishnu always apply *ūrdhva-puṇḍra tilaka*, and the devotees of Shiva, who are averse to devotional service to Vishnu, apply *tri-puṇḍra*, three lines.

The scriptures state that a king should take any initiated twice-born who does not wear *tilaka*, sit him backwards on an ass, and have him driven out of town. Therefore, every initiated *vaiṣṇava* must always wear *tilaka*. That is why the Lord, who is *jagad-guru*, the teacher of everyone, gave such instructions in His childhood pastimes. If one wants to worship Lord Vishnu, then he must accept the five *saṁskāras* related to initiation. Generally, a twice-born undergoes ten kinds of *saṁskāras*. Those who are lower than the twice-born undergo fifteen types of *saṁskāras* to become *vaiṣṇavas*. Just as a *brāhmaṇa* is obliged to maintain a pure *brāhmaṇa* thread, an initiated *vaiṣṇava* is obliged to maintain *śikhā*, *brāhmaṇa* thread, *tilaka*, and *mālā*.

For a description on how to apply *tilaka*, one should refer to the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (4.66-98). It is stated in *Padma Purāṇa*, *uttara-khaṇḍa*: “A practitioner should decorate his body with twelve marks while chanting the names of the Lord such as Keshava.” The process for decorating the twelve parts of the body with the twelve *tilaka* marks is as follows:

*lalāṭe keśavam dhyāyen nārāyaṇam athodare
vakṣaṇī-sthale mādhavam tu govindam kaṇṭha-kūpake
viṣṇum ca dakṣiṇe kuṅṣau bāhau ca madhusūdanam
trivikramam kandhare tu vāmanam vāma-pārśve
śrīdharam vāma-bāhau tu hrīṣīkeṣam tu kandhare
prṣṭhe ca padmanābham ca kaṭyāṁ dāmodaram nyaset
tat prakṣālena-toyan tu vāsudevāya mūrdhani
ūrdhva-puṇḍram lalāṭe tu sarveṣāṁ prathamam smṛtam
lalāṭādi krameṇaiva dhāraṇam tu vidhīyate*

When one marks the forehead with *tilaka*, he must remember Keshava. When one marks the lower abdomen, he must remember Narayana. For the chest, one should remember Madhava, and when marking the hollow of the neck one should remember Govinda. Lord Vishnu should be remembered while marking the right side of the belly, and Madhusudana should be remembered when

marking the right arm. Trivikrama should be remembered when marking the right shoulder, and Vamana should be remembered when marking the left side of the belly. Sridhara should be remembered while marking the left arm, and Hrishikesha should be remembered when marking the left shoulder. Padmanabha and Damodara should be remembered when marking the back. Then one should wash with water and remember Vāsudeva while wiping the hand on the head. One should put *tilaka* on the forehead first. This is the rule. Then one should put on *tilaka* according to the above-mentioned procedure.”

If one does not decorate his body with *tilaka*, he will incur sin. It is stated by Narada Muni in *Padma Purāṇa*: “If one performs sacrifice, gives in charity, undergoes austerity, studies the Vedas, or offers oblations to the forefathers without putting on *tilaka*, then all these activities will be useless. If a person does not decorate his body with *tilaka*, he is not to be seen, because his body is as impure as a crematorium.” It is mentioned in the *Āditya Purāṇa*: “A king should put a fallen *brāhmaṇa* whose body is devoid of *vaiṣṇava* marks of *tilaka*, conch, and wheel on the back of donkey and drive him out of his kingdom.” It is stated in *Padma Purāṇa*, *uttara-khaṇḍa*: “A person who performs any activity like worshiping deities without putting on *tilaka* achieves no benefit. There is no doubt about it. Know for certain that a person who performs *sandhyā* without wearing *tilaka* is simply demonic and surely goes to hell.”

Prohibition for wearing crooked or three-lined *tilaka*: It is stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*, *uttara-khaṇḍa*: “A person who wears three-lined *tilaka* instead of *vaiṣṇava tilaka* is the lowest of men. Because of breaking the rules for marking *tilaka* on the body, which is the abode of Lord Vishnu, such a person certainly goes to hell.” It is stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa*: “A person should not wear crooked *tilaka*, even if he is about to die, nor should he chant any names other than the holy names of Narayan. He should wear *vaiṣṇava tilaka*, using *gopī-candana* if available.” Elsewhere it is stated: “Learned persons know that there are prescriptions for the *brāhmaṇas* and devotees to wear *vaiṣṇava tilaka*, and other people should wear three-lined *tilaka*. If one sees or touches a *brāhmaṇa* who has put on three-lined *tilaka* rather than *vaiṣṇava tilaka*,

he should take bath with his clothes on. A *vaiṣṇava* should not wear three-lined *tilaka* rather than proper *vaiṣṇava tilaka* because such an act does not please Lord Hari.” In the narrations about the month of Kārtika in the *Skanda Purāṇa*, it is stated: “One should not see a person whose forehead is not decorated with *vaiṣṇava tilaka*. If one happens to do so, he should immediately look at the sun, for Lord Hari and Lakṣmīdevī reside within the *tilaka*.” It is stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*, *uttara-khaṇḍa*: “Marks of *tilaka* resembling a banyan leaf, a bamboo leaf, and the bud of a lotus are most enchanting.”

The glories of decorating the body with *tilaka* are as follows: “The beautiful vacant space within the mark of *tilaka* is the sitting place for Sri Lakṣmī and Sri Janārdana, the Lord of lords. Therefore, know for certain that the body marked with *tilaka* is a sanctified temple of the Lord.” It is mentioned in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*: “If a person who is impure, ill-behaved, and engaged in sinful activities, decorates his body with *tilaka* even with his mind, he certainly becomes pure forever. One should mark one’s forehead with *tilaka* while seeing one’s face in a mirror or in water, but never touch the *tilaka* with one’s fingernails.”

The rules and regulations for applying *tilaka*: It is stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*, *uttara-khaṇḍa*: “The most fortunate unalloyed devotees of Hari should decorate their bodies with marks of *tilaka* resembling the lotus feet of Hari with a vacant space between the two lines. They should begin to mark from the tip of the nose up to the end of the forehead with *tilaka* or other suitable clay. The tip of the nose refers to three-quarters down the nose. One should draw two separate lines beginning from the middle of the eyebrows upwards.” The prescription for keeping space within the mark of *tilaka*: “A fallen twice-born who applies *tilaka* without keeping a vacant space between the two lines certainly abandons Sri Hari and Lakshmi-devi, who reside within that space. There is no doubt that a fallen twice-born who applies *tilaka* without keeping a space maintains the feet of a dog on his forehead. Therefore, O beautiful one, *brāhmaṇas* and women should always mark their foreheads with *tilaka* resembling two sticks with a space between.”

The symptoms of *tilaka* as temples of Hari: “The mark of *tilaka* that starts from the nose and stretches up to the hair on the head with a beautiful space in between the lines is called a temple of Hari. Lord Brahma resides on the left side, Sadashiva resides on the right side, and Lord Vishnu resides in the middle of such a *tilaka* mark. One should not apply anything in the middle.” The clay used for preparing *tilaka* is described in the *Padma Purāṇa* as follows: “One should collect clay for *tilaka* beneath flowing waters that have bathed Lord Vishnu. One can also collect clay from the transcendental abode of Hari. One should devotedly collect clay from the Venkata Hill, from Sri Rangam, from Sri Kurma-kshetra, from Sri Dwarka, from Sri Prayaga, from Sri Nrisingha-kshetra, from Sri Varaha-kshetra, or from Sri Vrindavan [or any forest of *tulasī*] and then mix it with the water that has washed the lotus feet of Vishnu. In this way one should decorate one’s body with such *tilaka* and come before the Lord. O Maharaja Ambarish, to minimize your sinful reactions, just see one whose forehead is decorated with *tilaka* made of *gopī-candana*.” In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, Dhruva Maharaja speaks as follows: “If you see a person decorated with the *tilaka* marks of a conch and wheel, adorned with *tulasī mañjarīs* on his head, and his limbs smeared with *gopī-candana*, then why should you fear sinful reactions? A *vaiṣṇava* should mark his forehead with attractive *tilaka* of clay collected from the root of a *tulasī* plant. One should mark his forehead with *gopī-candana* and wear the garland that has been offered to the Lord. In this way, one should decorate one’s forehead with one of the three kinds of *tilaka*. One should also decorate his body with various shapes like Matsya and Kūrma and various weapons like the wheel in order to please Lord Hari.”

The Vedic injunction regarding applying *tilaka*: It is stated in the *Hiraṇyakeśīya* branch of the *Yajur Veda*: “A person who wears *tilaka* marks resembling the lotus feet of Hari becomes very fortunate and dear to the Supreme Brahman, Sri Hari. A human being who wears *tilaka* with a space in the middle becomes eligible for liberation.” In the *Kaṭha* branch of the *Yajur Veda* it is stated: “The great soul who after applying *tilaka* meditates through mantras on Sri Vishnu, who holds a *cakra*, who is the Supreme Absolute Truth, who is greater than the greatest, and who

resides in the hearts of His devotees, certainly becomes pure.” It is stated in the *Atharva Veda*: “The fortunate practitioner who throughout his life decorates his body with *tilaka* marks like the wheel, certainly attains the all-pervading Lord Vishnu’s supreme abode, which is the ultimate goal of the devotees.”

TEXTS 9-15

As *sanātana-dharma* Himself, the Lord establishes the principles of religion. In order to protect people’s religious principles, He would not tolerate any transgression.

The very moment such a delinquent would appear, the Lord would put him to such shame that he would never again come without first completing his morning worship. The Lord would say, “O brother, why I do not see any *tilaka* on your forehead? What is your explanation? The Vedas say that if a *brāhmaṇa*’s forehead is not decorated with *tilaka*, it is as good as a crematorium. I can understand that you have not performed your daily worship. Therefore, dear brother, your morning has become fruitless. Go back home and perform your morning duties again. Then you may return to study.” In this way, all of the Lord’s students were conscientious about performing their religious duties. ❧

— English translation by Bhumiapati Das. Edited and published by Pundarik Vidyanidhi Das. Vrajraj Press. Vrindavan. 2001.



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
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A SYMBOL OF UNSHAKEABLE FAITH

The *tilaka* as a symbol of unshakeable faith and steadfastness appears in a few stories of saints who resisted attempts by Muslim rulers to suppress Vaishnavism. Among these is Bhagavan Das, a pupil of Yuta Khojiji and Shyamadas, who lived in Mathura. Priya Das says that the Mughal emperor, noticing that many of his subjects were wearing *tilaka* and *mālā*, which he considered to be a refutation of his authority, issued a proclamation to the effect that no one should wear them. Many *vaiṣṇavas* gave up wearing them for fear of losing their lives, but one devotee, Bhagavan Das, was so filled with the blissful ocean of *bhakti* that he dared to present himself before the emperor wearing his *tilaka* and *mālā*. The emperor was so impressed and pleased by this display of faith and courage that he permitted Bhagavan Das to continue to reside in Mathura. It is also said that the saint subsequently founded a temple dedicated to Harideva.

A similar story is told about Biharinadeva (or Biharina Das), a follower of Hari Das, though it is not related in *Nijamatasiddhānta*, a work containing biographies of the *ācāryas* and saints of the sect. The emperor Akbar, who had a reputation for broad-mindedness in religious matters, decided to test the faith of the *vaiṣṇavas*. He summoned them all to attend his *darbār*, but warned that none of them must appear wearing a *tilaka* or *mālā*. Among the saints and mahantas, Biharinadeva alone decided that he would nevertheless present himself before Akbar wearing the signs of his faith. This was not on account of any egotism. It is said that Radha had appeared to him in a dream and told him not to be afraid. Accordingly, Biharinadev put on extra *tulasī-mālās* and enhanced his *tilaka* by smearing it with his thumb so that it extended down to the tip of his nose. This is how the ascetic followers of Hari Das account for their wearing of extra *mālās* and the fact that their *tilaka* is an elongated version of that of the Nimbarka *sampradāya*. At the *darbār*, Akbar proclaimed that Biharinadev was foremost among the *vaiṣṇavas* on account of his steadfastness. ❧

— Pages 40-41 of A.W. Entwistle, *Vaiṣṇava Tilakas; Sectarian Marks Worn by Worshipers of Viṣṇu*. International Association of the Vrindaban Research Institute. London. 1982.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 97 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

20 February 2005

Śrī Bhaimī Ekādaśī, 26 Madhava, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,711

Highlights

- **THE TEST OF OUR DEDICATION**

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

- **THE BLESSINGS OF NITAI**

From the life of Srila Gour Kishore Das Babaji

- **NITAI BROKE THE DAM**

Srila Locana Das Thakura Explanation by Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

- **NITAI'S MARRIAGE**

Adapted from Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara, chapter 12, texts 3870 to 4015

THE TEST OF OUR DEDICATION

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Now we have by Krishna's grace built up something significant in the shape of this ISKCON, and we are all one family. Sometimes there may be disagreement and quarrel, but we should not go away. These inebrieties can be ad-

justed by cooperative spirit, tolerance, and maturity. So I request you to kindly remain in the association of our devotees and work together. The test of our actual dedication and sincerity to serve the spiritual master will be in this mutual cooperative spirit to push on this movement and not make factions and deviate. ❧

— Letter to Babhru. 9 December 1973.

THE BLESSINGS OF NITAI

From the life of Srila Gour Kishore Das Babaji

One day, in the place known as Kulia in Nabadwip Dham, one Goswami, along with several persons dressed as *vaiṣṇavas*, came to see Srila Gour Kishore Das Babaji. The Goswami said, "Oh, Baba. For many days I have not been able to have your association. In that time I went to a foreign country."

Babaji Maharaja then said, "Why have you gone to a foreign country? If you stay here, there

will be no impediments. Why have gone to a foreign country to take that type of association?"

One associate of the Goswami replied, "He has gone to a foreign country in order to deliver the people there. If he doesn't go to other places then how will the residents there be able to understand the supreme goal of life?"

Hearing this, Babaji Maharaja became very disturbed and said, "If you actually want to uplift the people in other countries, then why do you accept money from foreigners? I understand your intention. You simply wanted a nice brick house to live in. If you are at all interested in performing genuine service to the Supreme Lord, then you should give up the understanding that you are the master. Then, Nityananda Prabhu will certainly bless you. I will tell Him myself that you want fifty brick houses, but if you simply want a nice brick house as a place in which to enjoy your wife and son, then Nityananda Prabhu, fulfilling all those different materialistic desires, will cancel the possibility of your obtaining love of Godhead. If you externally put on a show as if you want to deliver other persons, but internally you are afflicted with prestige and self-aggrandizement, you will become fallen."

Srila Gour Kishore Das Babaji Maharaja then began to loudly perform *kīrtana* and continued all day until dusk. Srila Babaji Maharaja made it evident that if one becomes offensive unto the

name of Krishna or becomes offensive in one's service, then the fruits of one's *bhajana* will simply be religious activities, accumulation of wealth, and fulfillment of lusty desires. This is the most degraded misfortune. Sri Nityananda Prabhu in the form of guru fulfills the desires of those who are deceitful. ❀

— Translated by Vyenkata Das Brahmachari, from *Āmāra Prabhu-kathā*, a collection of articles written by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada.

NITAI BROKE THE DAM

Srila Locana Das Thakura

Explanation by

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

*nitāi guṇa-maṇi āmār, nitāi guṇa-maṇi
āniyā premera banyā bhāsāla avanī*

*premera banyā loiyā nitāi āilā gauda-deśe
ḍubila bhakata-gaṇa dīna-hīna bhāse*

*dīna-hīna-patīta-pāmara nāhi bāche
brahmā durlabha prema sabākare jāche*

*ābaddha karuṇā sindhu (nitāi) kṛṣṇa muhān
ghare ghare bule prema-amīyār bān*

*lochan bole mora nitāi yebā nā bhajila
jāniyā śuniyā sei ātma-ghātī hoilo*

Lochan Das Thakur says that Nitai came to Gaudadesh with a flood of *prema*, a flood of love of Godhead. With that flood, He inundated the whole land. Nityananda Prabhu freely gives this pure love of Krishna. He never discriminates whether one is *patīta* or *pāmara*, degraded or qualified. *brahmā durlabha prema* — Nitai gives indiscriminately something that is very difficult even on the part of Lord Brahma to get. There is an unlimited ocean of love and there is a strong dam containing it. Nityananda Prabhu cut that down and broke open that strong embankment. So there was a heavy rush, a flood. That flood came to every home.

Lochan Das says that one who does not take shelter of Nityananda Prabhu is most unfortunate and is willingly committing suicide, *ātma-ghātī*. ❀

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar on 2 April 1994.

NITAI'S MARRIAGE

Adapted from Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara, chapter 12, texts 3870 to 4015

Adwaita, Srivas, and others began to discuss the possibility of Nityananda Prabhu's marriage. Krishna Das, the fortunate son of

Harihoda from Badagachi-gram, had great respect for Nityananda and wanted to arrange for Nityananda's marriage.

A *brāhmaṇa* named Surya Das, who had earned the title of Sarkhel by serving in the court of the Yavana king, lived at Saligrama near Nabadwip. He had four extremely virtuous brothers, and two daughters named Vasudha and Jahnavi, who were known for their beauty and good disposition. Surya Das had requested the wise *brāhmaṇas* to search for good bridegrooms for his daughters, but they were unable to find suitable candidates. However, they suggested that he go to the village of Ekachakra in Radhadesh and meet Hadai Pandita. He was a very good man and the father of Sri Nityananda Prabhu, a high spirited young boy. Traveling as an *avadhūta*, Nityananda had visited many holy places and was renowned as a great scholar. After visiting various places of pilgrimage, Nityananda had reached Nadia where He had met Sri Gaurachandra and decided to give up His stick of an *avadhūta*. The *brāhmaṇa* explained that Nityananda was the favorite associate of Sri Krishna Chaitanya, and thus would be the most suitable husband for his daughters. He also told Surya Das that if he was able to have such a son-in-law as Nityananda Prabhu, then he should certainly thank Providence for his good fortune. Surya Das listened attentively then returned home without uttering a word.

With his mind filled with anticipation, Surya Das lay down and fell asleep. In his dream he saw himself giving his two daughters to Nityananda in marriage. While the wise *brāhmaṇas* recited the marriage hymns, Surya Das dedicated his daughters to Nityananda, as the demigods in heaven showered flowers on their heads. While looking at his son-in-law, he suddenly saw the extremely enchanting Lord Balaram in place of Nityananda. His complexion was like a silver mountain, His face was effulgent like the moon, and His body was adorned with brilliant ornaments. He then looked at his daughters Vasu and Jahnavi and saw there instead Varuni and Revati, the two wives of Lord Balaram, with complexions as bright as gold. They wore beautiful dresses and ornaments and sat on either side of Balaram. Surya Das was overwhelmed by this vision and began to weep. Suddenly his dream faded away.

In the morning he went to the house of the *brāhmaṇa* and bowed to his feet saying, “I agree to your proposal. Please don’t delay.” The happy *brāhmaṇa* took four persons with him and started for Nadia chanting the auspicious names of Durga and Ganesh. When they arrived at the house of Srivas, they found Nityananda, looking like Cupid himself, sitting amongst Srivas and other associates. Feeling extremely fortunate, the *brāhmaṇa*’s eyes filled with tears. With great respect, Srivas inquired about the *brāhmaṇa*’s well being, and the *brāhmaṇa* replied, “I have come from my house to speak privately with you. Srivas took him to a secluded place and the *brāhmaṇa* gladly revealed his mind saying, “I’ve heard that you are searching for a bride for Nityananda, so I brought with me the information of two girls who are the daughters of Surya Das Pandita. I have searched everywhere, but have found none to compare to them. They are as beautiful as goddess Lakshmi, and are of good disposition. I think they will be suitable brides for Nityananda. Please come to my place and see the girls. Surya Das Sarkhel, who belongs to a good family, has agreed to this marriage and doesn’t want to delay any longer. Now tell me what is your opinion?”

Srivas Pandita replied, “Well, I shall see to it. Today I must send Krishna Das to Badagachi, but tomorrow they will go to your place and you can take Krishna Das to the house of Surya Das.” Hearing this, the *brāhmaṇa* happily hurried back to Surya Das’s house in Saligrama.

Meanwhile, Srivas Pandita informed Adwaita about the marriage proposal. Nityananda overheard their discussion and smiled softly and meaningfully. Krishna Das, who was a very intelligent son of Raja Harihoda, hastily went to Badagachi and immediately began preparing for the marriage. News of the wedding spread quickly and everyone said, “It will be a good one.”

Nityananda and His associates happily left Nabadwip and started for Badagachi. As they approached the village, the residents of Badagachi rushed forward to welcome them. The *brāhmaṇas* and wise people of the village were filled with happiness to see the graceful features of Nityananda Prabhu.

Meanwhile, in Saligrama, which was not far from Badagachi, Surya Das told his younger

brother Krishna Das, “I shall go to Badagachi first. You and the *brāhmaṇas* come behind me with these gifts.” Surya Das hastily came to Badagachi and went to meet Nityananda. Overwhelmed with emotion, Surya Das burst into tears and fell on the ground at Nityananda Prabhu’s feet. He held the feet of Nityananda in his two hands but could not speak a word. Smiling brightly, Nityananda embraced the fortunate Surya Das.

After meeting with all the *vaiṣṇavas* there, Surya Das fixed the date for Nityananda’s *adhivāsa* [In his purport to *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata ādi* 10.79, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur writes: The rituals in which sandalwood pulp and flower garlands are offered the day before an auspicious ceremony is called *adhivāsa*.] Krishna Das Pandit came from his house along with the *brāhmaṇas* and many items for the ceremony. In the evening, all the residents of Badagachi came, and at the auspicious time, Nityananda sat in the middle of the respected *brāhmaṇas* and wise persons. The people watched happily as the *adhivāsa* took place, and auspicious music filled the air. Surya Das, with the help of wise *brāhmaṇas*, joyfully performed the *adhivāsa* ceremony of his daughters. Surya Das had previously seen the real identities of his daughters, yet as a father he became very emotional about his daughters’ marriage. Carrying many items for the *adhivāsa*, the *brāhmaṇas* came from Badagachi to the house of Surya Das. At the time of *adhivāsa*, Vasudha and Jahnavi looked very sweet and elegant in beautiful dresses and ornaments. The *brāhmaṇas* began to cite hymns from the Vedas and blessed the brides with auspicious items such as *dhanya* and *durva*, and the girls made the sound of *ulu-dhvani* [a propitious sound made by vibrating the tongue]. After the completion of *adhivāsa*, the guests returned to their homes. That evening Nityananda Prabhu left Badagachi and started for Saligrama. Surya Das also happily returned to his house. Everyone who saw the extraordinary bridegroom Nityananda became enchanted by His beauty.

Nityananda Prabhu happily entered the village of Saligrama and came to the house of Surya Das. The people who rushed forward to touch the Lord’s feet were suddenly filled with devotion. From a hidden place, Sri Vasu and Jahnavi observed the beauty of their husband-to-be with extreme pleasure. A great crowd began to

congregate in the house of Surya Das, and the young girls decorated Vasu and Jahnava in beautiful dresses and ornaments. According to the customary procedures, Surya Das then offered his daughters to Nityananda. All the *brāhmaṇas*, and even the demigods, were enchanted by the beauty of the brides and the bridegroom.

The next day the house was filled with joyous festivities as Surya Das humbly performed the various social customs, and Nityananda satisfied the desires of all the devotees. Afterward, Nityananda Prabhu and His two wives returned to Badagachi. Srivas' wife and all the ladies there admired the beauty of the newlyweds. In *Śrī Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* it is stated that Surya Das was the incarnation of Kakudmi, the father of the wives of Lord Balaram. His daughters were previously Sri Varuni and Sri Revati. According to some, Sri Vasudha Devi was formerly Kalavani, and Sri Jahnava Devi was Ananga Manjari, the younger sister of Srimati Radharani. The wise saints also support this opinion.

Thereafter, Nityananda happily stayed in the village of Badagachi. The extraordinary qualities of the deliverer of mankind, Nityananda Prabhu, who was mad after Sri Gauranga, have been sung by many poets.

After a few days, Nityananda Prabhu and His followers returned to Nadia. Sachimata and all

the great devotees of Gaurahari together with their wives, were very happy to see Vasudha and Jahnavi. Following the order of Sachimata, Nityananda visited Santipura and then Saptagrama. According to the desire of the devotees, Nityananda Prabhu then went to Khardaha, where He stayed with his wives in a beautiful house. He spent some wonderful days there, causing great joy to His followers by the performance of *saṅkīrtana*. Then again, he returned to Nadia to see Sachimata.

— Unknown translator.

NITAI'S APPEARANCE

By a medieval *vaiṣṇava* named
Dina Krishna Das

(*Śrī-rāga*)

rāḍha deśe nāma, ekacakrā grāma
hāḍāi-pāṇḍita-ghara
śubha māgha māsi śukla-trayodaśī
janamila haladhara

In the county named Radhadesh, in the village of Ekachakra, on the *śukla-trayodaśī* of the auspicious month of *Māgha*, Lord Balaram took birth in the house of Hadai Pandit.

hāḍāi paṇḍita ati haraṣita
putra-mahotsava kare
dharaṇī-maṇḍala kare ṭalamala
ānanda nāhika dhare

Joyful Hadai Pandit celebrated the festival of his son's birth. The earth trembled in ecstatic agitation. No one could contain their bliss.

śāntipura-nātha mane haraṣita
kari kichu anumāna
antare jānilā bujhi janamila
kṛṣṇera agraja rāma

Adwaita Acharya, the Lord of Shantipur, became joyful. In His heart He knew that Krishna's elder brother Balaram had taken birth.

vaiṣṇavera mana ha-ila prasanna
ānanda-sāgare bhāse
e dīna pāmara ha-ibe uddhāra
kahe dīna kṛṣṇa-dāse

The hearts of all the *vaiṣṇavas* became full of delight. Everyone floated in an ocean of bliss. Lord Balaram would soon deliver all the *dīna* and *pāmara*, distressed and sinful persons. Thus speaks poor Krishna Das. ❀

— Unknown translator.

— Jagadbandhu Bhadra. *Gaura-pada-taraṅginī*. Sri Gauranga Press. Calcutta. 1931. Bengali.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir

National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 98

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

7 March 2005

Śrī Vijayā Ekādaśī, 10 Govinda, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,715

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SUCH PERSONS CANNOT UNDERSTAND

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



Persons who are always planning to do harm to other living entities are not eligible to understand Krishna consciousness and cannot enter the realm of transcendental loving service to the Lord. Also, there are so-called disciples who become submissive to a spiritual master most artificially, with an ulterior motive. They also cannot understand what Krishna consciousness or devotional service is. Persons who, due to being initiated by another sect of religious faith, do not find devotional service as the common platform for approaching the Supreme Personality of Godhead, also cannot understand Krishna consciousness. We have experience that some students come to join us, but because of being biased in some particular type of faith, they leave our camp and become lost in the wilderness. Actually, Krishna consciousness is not a sectarian religious faith; it is a teaching process for understanding the Supreme Lord and our relationship with Him. Anyone can join this movement without prejudice, but unfortunately there are persons who feel differently. It is better, therefore, not to instruct the science of Krishna consciousness to such persons.

Generally, materialistic persons are after some name, fame and material gain. So if someone takes to Krishna consciousness for these reasons, he will never be able to understand this philosophy. Such persons take to religious principles as a social decoration. They admit themselves into some cultural institution for the sake of name only, especially in this age. Such persons also cannot understand the philosophy of Krishna consciousness. Even if one is not greedy for material possessions but is too attached to family life, he also cannot understand Krishna consciousness. Superficially, such persons are not very greedy for material possessions, but they are too attached to wife, children and family improvement. When a person is not contaminated by the above-mentioned faults, yet at the ultimate issue is not interested in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or if he is a non-devotee, he also cannot understand the philosophy of Krishna consciousness. ❀

—Purport to *Bhāg.* 3.32.40.

IS GURU NECESSARY?

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

Question: Can one worship Krishna without being under the guidance of Gurudeva?

Srila Prabhupada: Never. Our only aim in life is to cultivate Krishna consciousness. This can only be done under the guidance

or instruction of a devotee of Krishna. Sri Varshabhanavi-devi, Srimati Radharani, is most favored by Krishna. Worshiping her is most favorable for worshiping Krishna. No one is more favorable than Sri Radha. Those who are very dear to Srimati Radharani are all our spiritual masters. We, the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, are the worshipers of Krishna, who belongs to Radharani. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas are more on the side of Radharani than on the side of Krishna. Sri Gurudeva is non-different from Srimati Radharani.

Only by obtaining the favor of the most favored is it possible to cultivate Krishna-consciousness. When one is not under the guidance of the most favored, one will not find anything favorable for the cultivation of Krishna consciousness or for the pursuit of Krishna's happiness. Instead, one will find that one's heart is dominated by the demoniac desire for one's own happiness. One has to give up such tendencies, which are unfavorable for devotion, and one has to give up all pride and arrogance. A devotee can find all opportunity to serve Krishna only when he wants to serve Krishna under the guidance of Gurudeva. But unfortunately, we have forgotten to make any effort to make Krishna happy. Instead, we have become busy in pursuit of our own happiness.

Alas! Instead of making Krishna the head of our household, we are acting in the role of the householder and we have become attached to our family life. But if we want what is good for us, then we have to become careful while we are alive in this human body. Otherwise we will be deceived; we will miss our excellent opportunity. ❧

— Excerpted from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

THE GREED OF THE LORD

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

When we speak of the advent of Gauranga Mahaprabhu, we should understand the cause of His appearance. There are two types of causes — external and internal. The external cause is to spread love of God through *hari-saṅkīrtana*, the chanting of the holy name. The chanting of the holy name is the process of religion for this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, *Kali-yuga dharma*. Srila Vrindavana Das Thakur describes in *Caitanya-bhāgavatā* (ādi 2.22, 23, 26, 27):

*kali-yuga dharma haya hari-saṅkīrtana
etad arthe avatīrṇa śrī śacīnandana*

*ei kahe bhāgavate sarva-tattva-sāra
kīrtana-nimitta gauracandra-avatāra*

*kali-yuge sarva-dharma hari-saṅkīrtana
sarva prakāśilena caitanya-nārāyaṇa*

*kali-yuge saṅkīrtana-dharma pālībāre
avatīrṇa hailā prabhu sarva-parikare*

Sachinandana Gauranga Mahaprabhu is the father of *hari-saṅkīrtana*, and He appears with all His associates, His paraphernalia, and His abode for this purpose — to teach the chanting of the holy name. The chief result of this *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana* is to achieve *kṛṣṇa-prema*, pure love for Krishna, by which one will get Krishna. Srila Locan Das Thakur has written in *Caitanya-maṅgala*:

*brahmāra durlabha prema sabākāre yāche
dīna hīna patita pāmara nāhi bāche*

It is very difficult, even on the part of Lord Brahmā, to get such *prema*. But Mahaprabhu is offering and distributing this *kṛṣṇa-prema* freely and indiscriminately, even to the most degraded and sinful persons, *āpāmaraiṇ yo vitatāra* (Cc. *madhya* 23.1). He freely distributes love of Godhead even to the lowest of men, the Jagais and Madhais. Therefore, He is known as *prema-puruṣottama*, the Personality of Godhead who gives *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Five thousand years ago, Krishna came in His own *svarūpa*, His original form. In His *kurukshetra-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa gave His message in the form of *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna, and through Arjuna He instructed all mankind. There He gave confidential, more confidential, and most confidential instructions. His most confidential instruction is *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad yāji mām namaskuru* — “Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, and offer your homage unto Me.” (Bg.18.65) His concluding instruction is *sarva dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* — “Give up all varieties of *dharma* and just surrender unto Me.” (Bg.18.66) However, Krishna only said this theoretically. He never taught how to surrender practically.

Krishna is *suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānām* — the only well-wishing friend of all living entities. (Bg.5.29) Therefore, after winding up

His pastimes at the end of *Dvāpara-yuga*, the previous age, He thought, “I have given confidential, more confidential and most confidential instruction to Arjuna for all mankind. But after *Dvāpara-yuga* comes *Kali-yuga*, the most sinful age. Owing to an increase in sinful activities, the consciousness of the people is most polluted. They cannot understand the path of surrender, *śaraṇāgati-tattva*. And I have only spoken theoretically. I have not practically demonstrated how to surrender. Therefore I have to go again.” So Krishna came as Gauranga Mahāprabhu.

*yuga-dharma pravartāimu nāma-saṅkīrtana
cāri bhāva-bhakti diyā nācāmu bhuvana*

(Krishna said:) “I shall go and preach the *yuga-dharma*, the chanting of the holy name, and give the four forms of *bhakti*, devotional service in *dāsyā* — servitorship; *sakhya* — friendship; *vātsalya* — parental love, and *mādhurya* — conjugal love. *Śānta*, the mellow of neutrality, is discarded in Mahāprabhu’s line. The Lord decided, “I shall make the whole world dance with *bhāva-bhakti*, ecstatic love of God.” (Cc. ādi 3.19)

*āpani karimu bhakta-bhāva aṅgikāre
āpani ācari’ bhakti śikhāimu sabāre*

*āpane nā kaile dharma śikhāna nā yāya
ei ta’ siddhānta gītā-bhāgavata gāya*

I shall accept *bhakta-bhāva*, the mood of a devotee, and I shall teach *bhakti*. Unless I practice *bhakti*, *śaraṇāgati*, in My own life, I cannot teach it to others. (Cc. ādi 3.20, 21)

This is the external cause for the advent of Lord Chaitanya, *bahirāṅga-kāraṇam*. The external cause is for the sake of others, the people of *Kali-yuga*, whereas the internal cause, *antarāṅga-kāraṇam*, is for Himself. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (ādi 1.6) describes that the internal cause is to fulfill three desires:

*śrī rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā kīdrśo vānayaivā-
svādyo yenādbhuta-madhurimā kīdrśo vā madīyāḥ
saukhyam cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīdrśam veti lobhaḥ
tad-bhāvāḍhyāḥ samajani śacī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ*

Swarupa Damodara Goswami has spoken this, and it is quoted by Rupa Goswami in his *Lalita-mādhava*. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, three desires remained unfulfilled. First, Krishna wanted to know, “What is Radharani’s love?” Next, He desired to know, “What is My *rūpa-mādhurī*, My excellent beauty that

Radharani relishes? How can I relish it?” And the third desire, “What type of pleasure or happiness does Radharani derive by relishing My beauty, and how can I relish it?” These three desires developed in the Supreme Lord Krishna. Therefore, *śacī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ* — He appeared from the womb of Sachi-mata. That is Gauranga Mahāprabhu.

Greed is Natural

In the above verse, the word *lobha*, “greed,” is very significant. The Lord has greed. Therefore it is quite natural that we also have greed. We are greedy persons — materially greedy. But the greed of the material world is condemned; it is considered one of our enemies. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.21), Lord Krishna says:

*tri-vidham narakasyedam
dvāram nāśanam ātmanah
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas
tasmād etat trayam tyajet*

Give up these three, *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha* — lust, anger and greed. If you become influenced or affected by them, then you will open your door to hell. So give them up.

Greed is condemned, because those who are materially greedy must definitely suffer. In this regard, there is a small story:

Once, a greedy boy saw his mother put some berries into an earthen pot that had a very narrow opening. Greedy to get some of those berries, he put his hand into the pot and grasped a handful. But when he tried to get his hand out of the pot, his hand got caught because the opening was too narrow. This caused some pain as he pulled, so he was crying. Although he was suffering, he would not let go of the berries. This is a simple story showing that the consequence of greed is suffering. Therefore, Bhagavan Krishna says in the *Gītā*, “Give up greed.”

But greed can be engaged in Krishna’s service. The word *lobha* is an ancient word, not a modern word. The seed of greed exists in both *bhagavān*, the Lord, and *bhakta*, the devotee. In respect to *bhagavad-bhakta*, the devotee of the Lord, Srila Narottam Das Thakur says (*Prema-bhakti-candrikā* 2.10), *lobha sādhu-saṅge hari-kathā*. How can you use greed? Develop greed to have more and

more *sādhū-saṅga*, association with *sādhū*, pure devotees, and to hear more and more *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, talks about the Lord. Develop this greed. Such greed is spiritual, transcendental. One should not give it up. Rather, one should develop it more and more. The more one develops this greed, the more he gets spiritual relishment and makes spiritual advancement. One who is not greedy in this way cannot make advancement on the spiritual path. So material greed should be given up, whereas spiritual greed should be developed.

Srila Rupa Goswami has said (*Padyāvalī* 14):

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalaṁ
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate*

Pure devotional service in Krishna consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price — intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.

In this verse, the word *laulya* means *lobha*, greed. The purport of the verse is that if you have such spiritual greed you can achieve *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa*, the mellow of love for Krishna. Otherwise, you cannot achieve it. Therefore, one should

develop the greed to have more and more association with pure devotees and hear more and more about the Lord. Then you will make advancement in *bhajana-sādhana*, devotional service. Materialistic people do not know how to use greed. They abuse greed by directing it toward material enjoyment and possessions, and thus they suffer. So when we speak about the advent of Sachinandana Gaura Hari, we speak of spiritual greed, not this material greed.

THE MASTER OF THE GOPIS HAS BECOME A MENDICANT

The medieval Vaishnava Shivananda

(*Suha-i-rāga*)

*pūrve ye-i gopīnātha śrīmatī rādhikā sātha
se sukha bhāviyā ebe dīna
ye kare muralī bāya dandā kamaṇḍalu tāya
kaṭi-taṭe e ḍora kaupīna*

He who was formerly Radha's companion and the master of the *gopīs* has now become a joyful poor mendicant. He who formerly held a flute in His hand now holds a *dandā* and *kamaṇḍalu*. At His waist, a *kaupīna* is tied.

*adhare muralī pūri vṛja-badhūra mana curi
kari sukha bāḍaye tāhāra
nayana-kaṭākṣa-bāṇe marama paśiyā hāne
se mārāṇe bahe aśru-dhāra*

He who formerly filled the flute at His lips, stole the *gopī's* hearts, enjoyed many blissful pastimes, and fired many arrows of sidelong glances at the *gopī's* hearts, now sheds flooding rivers of tears from His eyes.

*yamunāra vane vane go-dhana rākhāla sane
naṭa-veśe vijayī bākhāne
nāhi jāni seha ebe ki jāni kāhāra bhāve
vilāsaye saṅkīrtana sthāne*

He who formerly, dressed like a dancing-actor, walked from forest to forest by the Yamuna as He herded the cows, is now overcome with love. Enjoying pastimes of *saṅkīrtana*, He knows nothing but ecstasy.

*bhāvite se saba sukha dvi-guṇa bāḍhaye dukha
viraha anale jari jari
e śivānandera hiyā gaḍila pāṣāṇa diyā
nā darabe se sukha soṇari*

In the ecstasy of meeting, He is filled with bliss. In the agony of separation, His unhappiness doubles and He burns in the flames of suffering. His chanting of the holy name fills with bliss even Shivananda's heart, a heart built of stone. ❧

— Gokulananda Sen. *Pada-kalpa-taru*. Syamacharan Library. Calcutta. 438 Gaurabda (1924). Bengali.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 99 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

22 March 2005

Śrī Amalaki Ekādaśī, 25 Govinda, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,505

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ACHIEVING THE GRACE OF THE LORD

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

As already stated, Brahma is the original spiritual master for the universe, and since he was initiated by the Lord Himself, the message of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is coming down by disciplic succession, and in order to receive the real message of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* one should approach the current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession. After being initiated by the proper spiritual master in that chain of succession, one should engage himself in the discharge of *tapasya* in the execution of devotional service. One should not, however, think himself on the level of Brahma to be initiated directly by the Lord from inside, because in the present age no one can be accepted to be as pure as Brahma. The post of Brahma to officiate in the creation of the universe is offered to the most pure living being, and unless one is so qualified one cannot expect to be treated like Brahmaji directly. But one can have the same facility through unalloyed devotees of the Lord, through scriptural instructions (as revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* especially), and also through the bona fide spiritual master available to the sincere soul. The Lord Himself appears as the spiritual



master to a person who is sincere in heart about serving the Lord. Therefore the bona fide spiritual master who happens to meet the sincere devotee should be accepted as the most confidential and beloved representative of the Lord. If a person is posted under the guidance of such a bona fide spiritual master, it may be accepted without any doubt that the desiring person has achieved the grace of the Lord. ❀

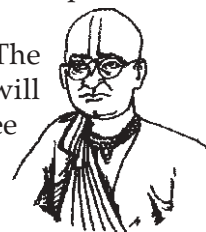
— Purport to *Bhāg.* 2.9.7

NOT BY DRESS ALONE

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur
Prabhupada*

Question: Will it be more helpful if we become *sannyāsīs*?

Srila Prabhupada: Never. The external garb of a *sannyāsī* will not help anyone. If a devotee thinks that gurudeva is his life and soul, and serving gurudeva is his life's purpose, then he will become a real *sannyāsī*. One has to become a devotee-*sannyāsī* by being attached to gurudeva and the holy name. But those who will not serve Krishna under the guidance of gurudeva will have bad association, and will face disaster. They will never know the Supreme Lord, nor will they ever be able to serve him.



In this world, it is possible to take the garb of a *sādhū* and deceive others. But the omniscient Lord, who is the giver of the

[next column](#) ❀

result of karma, will not let them get away with it. Those who are taking the garb of a *sādhū* and spending their time in bad association are only hurting themselves. Those who rely on others instead of relying on God face only misery. ❧

— Excerpted from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

THE GREED OF THE LORD

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

(Continued from issue 98:) As explained earlier, the Lord developed three types of greed that could not be fulfilled in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. Therefore, He descended as Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. In *gaura-līlā* those three types of greed are fulfilled.

Using the word “greed” is wonderful. Has anyone used the word this way before? No one has used such a word previously. But Swarupa Damodara Goswami has used it. He said that because of this greed, *vrajarāja-nandana* Krishna became Sachinandana Gaura Hari.

The Supreme Lord is *pūrṇa-brahma*, the complete whole, who has no deficiency and who is in want of nothing. Still, He develops greed. This is wonderful. He is *āptakāma* and *ātmārāma* — self-satisfied. He lacks nothing. Then why such greed? One should understand its mystery, the *tattva* behind it. He who is *paramānanda-maya*, supremely blissful, and *sac-cid-ānanda-maya*, full of eternity, knowledge and bliss, He develops greed. But what type of greed, and for what?

From this we can understand how the seed of greed is also there in the Supreme Lord, what to speak of us. The seed of this greed gradually develops, and the culmination is there in *gaurāṅga-svarūpa*, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. The *ācāryas* have explained how this takes place.

The Greed of Lord Vishnu

Vishnu, the Lord of Vaikuntha, develops some greed — He wants to fight. Because He is *bhagavān*, the Supreme Lord, the six types of opulence are completely manifested in Him. And one of His opulences is *bala*, strength. Since He has incomparable strength, it is quite natural that He desires to fight and fulfill this greed. Whenever Bhagavan wants

to fulfill some desire, His internal energy, *yogamāyā*, creates the proper atmosphere. So when Vishnu desired to fight, *yogamāyā* created the circumstances to fulfill that desire.

Another point is that the opponent should be equally strong, otherwise one cannot get pleasure in fighting. But with whom shall the Lord fight? By the will of the Lord and the arrangement of *yogamāyā*, the two strong doorkeepers of the spiritual world, Jaya and Vijaya, were cursed by the four Kumāras to become demons for three lives. First, they became Hiranakshya and Hiranyakashipu, then Ravana and Kumbha-karna, and finally Shishupala and Dantavakra. In three incarnations, Lord Vishnu, Narayana, enjoyed fighting with them. This is the greed of Vishnu as described in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

The Greed of Narasinghadeva

Then came the greed of Narasinghadeva. Narasinghadeva has two types of forms: *ugra*, fearsome, and *anugra*, peaceful. After killing Hiranyakasipu, Narasinghadeva's form was extremely fearsome, and He danced like the *tāṇḍava-nṛtya*, the devastating dance of Lord Shiva at the time of annihilation. The whole world was trembling to see that angry dancing. Although the demigods were offering Him many prayers, they were unable to pacify Him. Then the demigods requested Bhakta Prahlada, “Please go and calm the anger of Lord Narasinghadeva.” Prahlada Maharaja is a dear devotee of the Lord, so when Prahlada went to offer Him prayers, Narasinghadeva became calm and manifested His peaceful form. Then Narasinghadeva sat His dear devotee Prahlada upon His lap as if he were His own son. *Vātsalya-prema*, parental love and affection, developed in Lord Narasinghadeva.

Both father and son relish this *rasa*, mellow. As the son sits on the father's lap, the father relishes and the son relishes. The relishing is reciprocal. But of the two, the son relishes more than the father. So Narasinghadeva developed a type of greed: “How can I sit on the lap of My father and relish this *rasa*? In this incarnation My father is a stone pillar, so how can I relish it?” From then on, after Narasinghadeva, all the incarnations of the Lord accept a father and mother to fulfill that greed.

The Greed of Lord Rama

Lord Rama also developed greed. Vibhisana and Sugriva are Lord Rama's friends. This means there is *sakhya-rasa*, friendly affection, in the pastimes of Lord Rama. But there are two types of *sakhya-rasa* — *sambhrama* and *viśrambha*. *Sambhrama* means friendship with awe and reverence, and *viśrambha* means friendship as equals, without awe and reverence. In Lord Rama's pastimes, there is no question of equality. His friends Sugriva and Vibhisana cannot climb onto His shoulders or snatch food from His mouth. They are even afraid that their legs may touch Lord Rama's body, because they think that this would be offensive. Their friendship is *sambhrama-sakhya*, friendship with awe and reverence.

Viśrambha-sakhya is not like that. In *viśrambha-sakhya* there is such love and affection that the friends think themselves equal with the Lord. There is no question of awe and reverence. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* you will find this *viśrambha-sakhya*. The cowherd boys climb onto Krishna's shoulders and snatch the food from His mouth, and Krishna snatches the food from their mouths. The legs of the cowherd boys touch Krishna's body, and Krishna is not disturbed because it is as if those were His own legs. If your own leg touches your own body, does that disturb you? No. There is no agitation because it is your own leg and not someone else's. If another person comes very near, one moves cautiously. But these cowherd boys are so dear to Krishna that their relationships with Him are on the platform of equality, *abhinna*.

In the pastimes of Lord Rama, this type of *sakhya-rasa* is not relished. Therefore, Rama developed greed for it: "How can I relish it?" That desire was fulfilled in *kṛṣṇa-avatāra*.

Essence of Conjugal Mellow

Then there is also another *rasa*, *mādhurya-rasa*, the conjugal mellow. In His *rāma-avatāra*, the Lord is *maryāda-puruṣottama*, He strictly follows Vedic rules and regulations and never transgresses them. He accepts only one wife — *eka-patni-dhara*. Therefore, although His pastimes include *mādhurya-rasa*, the conjugal mellow, it is not relished fully. The essence of the mellow is not relished. That conjugal *rasa* is relished to the highest degree when there is union, *milana*, and

separation, *viraha*, between lover and beloved. In *rāma-līlā*, Ravana kidnapped Sita, and later Lord Rama banished Sita to give pleasure to His citizens. So Rama and Sita are united and separated. But there is no variegatedness in this type of separation, and it is not natural. It is forced. So there is no question of relishing the essence of the conjugal mellow.

In *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, Rupa Goswami has described different types of separation — *pūrva-rāga*, *māna*, *prema-vaicittya* and *pravāsa-viraha*. In *rāma-līlā* there are no such varieties of *viraha*, but in Krishna's pastimes there are. Therefore, Lord Rama developed the greed to relish them. In *kṛṣṇa-avatāra* this greed is fulfilled.

Viraha, separation between the lover and the beloved, is the highest platform of *prema*. On that platform, the *nāyaka* and *nāyikā*, lover and beloved, relish that mellow in their heart. Therefore, in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* the Lord is *rādhā-kānta* (the husband of Radharani) and *gopī-kānta* (the husband of the *gopīs*). But although Radha and the *gopīs* are His own wives, He made them the wives of others in order to relish *parakīya-rasa*, paramour love.

In *rāma-līlā*, only *svakīya-rasa* is relished — love with one's own wife — not *parakīya-rasa*. Therefore, Lord Rama developed greed for the *parakīya-rasa*.

To relish *parakīya-rasa*, Krishna made His own wives the wives of others. So that greed which remained unfulfilled in the pastimes of Rama is fulfilled in the pastimes of Krishna.

In this way, the development of greed gradually caused the descent of one incarnation of the Lord after another.

The Abode of Love

Now in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* these three types of greed are there:

śrī rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā kīḍṛśo vānayaivā-svādyo yenādbhuta-madhurimā kīḍṛśo vā madīyaḥ saukhyam cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīḍṛśam veti lobhāt tad-bhāvādhyāḥ samajani śacī-garbha-sindhau harīnduh

Desiring to understand the glory of Radharani's love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She realises the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appears from the womb of Srimati Sachi-devi, as the moon appears from the ocean. (Cc. ādi 1.6)

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is Krishna Himself, but His mood is different. He is in the mood of a devotee, especially *rādhā-bhāva*, the mood of Radharani,

ataeva sei bhāva aṅgikāra kari
sādhilena nija vāñchā gaurāṅga-śrī-hari

Then Lord Gauranga, who is Sri Hari Himself, accepted the sentiments of Radha and thus fulfilled His own desires. (Cc. ādi 4.50)

This is the internal cause of *caitanya-avatāra*. Krishna developed three very deep desires. The first greed is this: “What is the love of Radharani? How can I understand it?”

ei prema-dvāre nitya rādhikā ekali
āmāra mādhyamāṁṛta āsvāde sakali

Only Srimati Radharani, by the strength of Her love, completely relishes the mellow or beauty of Krishna. (Cc. ādi 4.139)

Krishna is *viśaya-vigraha*, the object of love, and Radharani is *āśraya-vigraha*, the abode of love. How can the *viśaya* understand the *āśraya* unless He accepts the mood of the *āśraya*? It is not possible.

Mirror of the Heart

Secondly, “What is My beauty?” Krishna is extremely beautiful, *mādhuryaka-nīlaya*. *Brahma-saṁhita* (5.30) states: *kandarpa-koṭi-*

kamanīya-viśeṣa-śobham — His beauty far excels that of crores of Cupids. Krishna is so beautiful. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (madhya 8.138) states: *vrndāvane ‘aprākṛta navīna madana’* — In Vrindavana He is the transcendental spiritual Cupid, ever fresh and new. Whenever you see Krishna, His beauty is newer and newer. He never grows old.

Krishna asks, “What is My beauty?” But how can He understand it? Can you see your own face? You may see the face of someone else, but to see your own face the help of a mirror is required. Then you can see your own face, but that is only a reflection. A mirror reflects and you see the reflection. How can Krishna see His beauty? What kind of mirror is required? *sat-prema-hṛdaya-darpaṇa* — The heart is a mirror, *darpaṇa*, and *sat-prema-hṛdaya* is the heart of a *premī-bhakta*, one who has developed completely pure love. So the heart of such a *premī-bhakta* is a mirror, and in that mirror Krishna sees His form. But that is not a reflection. You may see the reflection in a mirror, but in the heart of a *premī-bhakta*, in the mirror of pure love, Krishna sees Himself. In Sanskrit, a reflection is called “*prati-bimba*”. “*Prati*” is an *upasarga*, a prefix. There are twenty-one *upasargas*: *pra*, *parā*, *ap*, *saṁ*, *su*, *abi*, *api*, *upa*, *prati*, *ati*, *ā*, etc. So *prati* is one of the twenty-one *upasargas*. In English, “*prati-bimba*” means “reflection”, but Krishna never sees the *prati-bimba*; Krishna sees the *bimba*. In other words, He sees Himself. Not *prati-bimba*, but *bimba*. That is *sat-prema-darpaṇa*. The heart of a *premī-bhakta* is such a mirror where Krishna sees Himself. And the best mirror is the heart of Srimati Radharani.

Krishna’s third desire is, *saukhyaṁ cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīdṛśaṁ veti lobhāt* — “What *sukha* and what *ānanda*, what happiness and what pleasure, does Radharani feel by relishing My beauty. How can I know it?”

Because these three types of greed remained unfulfilled in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, to fulfill them Krishna appeared from the womb of Sachi-mata as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This is the internal cause of Mahaprabhu’s appearance.

Therefore, Swarupa Damodara Goswami has used this word *lobhāt*, meaning “from greed”. This word is most significant. ॐ

— From *The Embankment of Separation*, chapter one. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar. 1996.

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A free bi-monthly service provided by:
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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 100 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

5 April 2005

Śrī Pāpamocani Ekādaśī, 11 Viṣṇu, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,511

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WORSHIP ACCORDING TO THE LORD'S MOOD

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

These comparative studies on the life of Krishna and Ramachandra are very intricate, but the basic principle is that Ramachandra appeared as an ideal king and Krishna appeared as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although there is no difference between the two. A similar example is Lord Chaitanya. He appeared as a devotee, and not as the Supreme



Personality of Godhead, although He is Krishna Himself. We should accept the Lord's mood in particular appearances, and we should worship Him in that mood. Lord Chaitanya, because He is Krishna Himself, is sometimes worshiped in the same manner as Krishna. But Krishna was in the role of enjoyer, and Lord Chaitanya is in the role of being enjoyed. So, the party known as Gauranga Nagari is considered to be deviated from pure devotional service, because of giving Lord Chaitanya the same facility as Krishna, which He did not like. Our service mood should be compatible to the attitude of the Lord.

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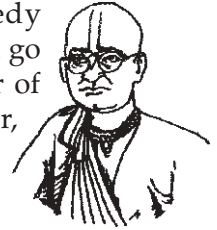
Not that we should overlap the attitude of Krishna to Lord Chaitanya, or Lord Chaitanya to Krishna, or Krishna to Ramachandra, or Ramachandra to Krishna. ❧

— Letter to Satsvarupa Das. 16 June 1968.

GHOSTS, AND CHANTING RAMA-NAMA

From the Life of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

One day I went to eat *gamarul* fruit in the garden near my grandfather's parlor. I heard that a ghost lived in the fruit tree, and on that day I ran away in fear of the ghost. Another day I thought that if some remedy could be effected, then I could go and eat the fruit without fear of the ghost. In the hot weather, *gamarul* fruit is very tasty. I made inquiries from many people about how to deal with ghosts, and no one said that there was no such thing as ghosts. Being very disturbed, I asked Vachaspati Mahashaya, who said that ghosts were a particular form of living being. Their form is of the wind and their eyes are like the *kancha* fruit [very small and red]. Hearing the words of Vachaspati Mahasaya, I became even more afraid of ghosts. But where there is no *gamarul*, there is no eating.



The mother of Chiba was very expert in the occult. She was an exorcist for some people, and she oversaw the storage room of my grandfather. Upon questioning her, she informed me that there is no fear of ghosts while one chants the name of Rama. One servant said the same thing. By way of experiment, I went to the site of the gamarul tree, calling the name of Rama over and over again, and I found no evidence of a ghost in any fashion. Knocking down some fruit, I ate two quarters. I understood that the name of Rama was protection against the ghost. At dusk, I would always utter *rāma-nāma*. When walking about in the streets and alleys I always chanted *rāma-nāma*. I obtained great satisfaction in my mind and for many days I took this medicine against the ghost. I heard that a ghost lived in the *homa* building. Uttering the name of Rama, I chased the ghost away from the *pūjā* building. Now I was no longer afraid to go outside at dusk. ❧

— *Svalikhita Jivani*, Thakur Bhaktivinode's autobiography. Chapters 79-80. English Translation by Shukavak Das.

A SPECIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE LADY DEVOTEES

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur
Prabhupada*

On 21 September 1925, *Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada* gave a long lecture to the devotees assembled at the Gaudiya Math about how to lead an exemplary devotional life. An excerpt from that lecture follows:

All of you please perceive everything of this world as ingredients for serving Krishna; everything of this world is actually meant for Krishna's service. Please see the whole race of women as beloved consorts of Krishna, and help them to always engage themselves in the service of Krishna. Please do not consider them as objects of your sense enjoyment. They are to be enjoyed by Krishna; they are never to be enjoyed by the living entities. Please do not see your fathers and mothers as a means to your own sense gratification, but see them as Krishna's fathers and mothers. Please do not see your sons as a means to your own sense gratification, but see them as belonging to the group of servitors of Bala Gopala. With your eyes, please see the kadamba tree, the river Yamuna and its sandy bank, and the beauty of the full moon. You won't have any more mundane feelings; you will see Goloka, and the beauty of Goloka will be manifest in your

home. Then you won't have any material feelings for your home. You will be relieved from the propensities of householder life.

Our maths are being built at many places, and many *sannyāsīs*, *vānaprasthas*, *grhasthas* and *brahmacārīs* are living there all the time and receiving the opportunity to learn spiritual conduct. But we have been trying for a long time to also give the mothers [women] the opportunity for devotional service. Of course, those who have the facility and opportunity for devotional service in their own homes do not need a separate residence.

But very often we hear that many of them are impeded in their devotional service due to bad association. It will be very beneficial for them if we can build Sri Vishnupriya Palli [*palli* means "neighborhood"] in Sridham Mayapura, near the residence of Sriman Mahaprabhu, and they can live there separately from their families and render devotional service. They actually belong to the group of Sri Vishnupriya Devi [the wife of Mahaprabhu, who was left behind in Nabadwip when He took *sannyāsa*]. Therefore, it is proper for them to live in the house of Sriman Mahaprabhu and to serve Him under the shelter of Sri Vishnupriya Devi. There should not be any bad association or mundane male association for them there. Only a few devotees like Ishan [the old devotee servant who took care of Sri Sachidevi and Sri Vishnupriya Devi after Mahaprabhu left] can stay at a distance and take care of them. It is necessary to have such an exemplary neighborhood so that the mothers [women] can read scripture every day, discuss devotional topics with each other, and have *iṣṭa-goṣṭhī* about devotional topics, so they can give up all luxury, live an exemplary, saintly life, always chant the holy name, and take care of the ingredients of Sriman Mahaprabhu's service and serve him in every way. ❧

— From page 339 of *Saraswati Jayaśrī*, edited by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated and published in *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*, page 32-33. Mandala Publishing. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

KRISHNA DISPLAYS A PASTIME OF LORD RAMACHANDRA

*From Murari Gupta's
Śrī Chaitanya-carita 4.5.5-14*

In the invocation (1.1.48-53) to his Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala, *Srila Lochan Das Thakur* has expressed his gratitude to *Srila Murari Gupta* and his book *Śrī Caitanya-carita*:

While living in Nabadwip, Sri Murari Gupta had the opportunity to always remain in the company of Lord Gaurachandra. Who can describe the greatness of Murari Gupta? He is known throughout the world as Hanuman. After crossing the ocean to Lanka, Hanuman burned Ravana's palace to the ground. Then Hanuman brought Rama the good news about His beloved Sita. He revived Lakshman by bringing medicinal herbs. That same Hanuman now resides in Nadia as Murari Gupta. Being highly realized, Murari Gupta knows all truths. As an eternal associate of the Lord, he is fixed at the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu. He expertly told all of Lord Chaitanya's childhood and boyhood pastimes in his great Sanskrit epic, Śrī Krishna-caitanya-carita Mahākavya.

While taking Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on *vraja-maṇḍala-parikramā*, the *brāhmaṇa* Krishna Das said to Him, "Please look upon this reservoir of water named Setu-Bandha, that was personally created by Sri Krishna."

Hearing this with great wonder, Gauranga Mahaprabhu's divine body became covered with goose bumps of ecstasy, and He said respectfully, "O Krishna Das! Kindly tell Me the story of this lake."

Drinking the ambrosial words of Sri Gaurachandra through his ears, and remembering Sri Krishna, Krishna Das smiled brightly and replied as follows, "Sri Hari, the chief among all *rasikas*, delights in tasting sweet mellows in the midst of the assembly of *gopīs*. Once, while sporting like a young elephant within this lake, He announced, 'I am Sri Ramachandra, the best of the Raghu dynasty!'

"Srimati Radharani, the crest-jewel of all charming goddesses, responded, 'You are only a cowherd's son. All that You do is wander about tending his herds of cows. A king is the protector of truth and virtue. His task is certainly a very difficult one for others to attempt. To destroy the demon Ravana, Sri Ramachandra built a bridge to Lanka. That was certainly a very glorious achievement. Don't venture to broadcast Your own qualities and compare Yourself to Him, for You are nothing but a thief of the clothes and ornaments of young girls!'

"Then Sri Krishna, who is the master of uncountable transcendental pranks and the exclusive enjoyer of mischievous *rasa*-imbued jests, replied to Radha, 'I am an exquisite jewel of all sublime qualities, and this You know very well, for You are a cowherd's daughter! If someone were to take a great abundance of

rocks and trees from the mountains and weave them together on the water, they could never float. Still, O source of My ecstasy, You may now witness a demonstration of the power of My host of sublime jewel-like qualities!'

"All of Radha's *sakhīs* are topmost *rasikās*, and understood the inner meaning of Radhika's words. Enthusiastically forming a line, they brought many rocks, trees and so forth from the forest. Sri Krishna used them to form a bridge that floated upon the water of this lake, and as everyone looked upon the scene, they bowed down and glorified Him with utterances of 'Jaya! Jaya!'

"The pastimes of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna in the company of their *gopī* friends are imbued with the zenith of relishable *rasa*, always beginning with the *rasa* of comedy. All glories to those pleasure pastimes, which are forever filled with the uninterrupted ever-expanding flow of Their divine *prema*! The topmost *rasikas* who hear of these pastimes and thus remember the Divine Couple, simply laugh at the idea of achieving happiness through mere transcendental knowledge, and without a qualm they utterly ridicule the thought of liberation." ❧

— Adapted from the English translation by Sri Bhakti Vedanta Bhagavata Swami. Gaura Vani Press. Distributed by Nectar Books. Union City, Georgia. 1998.

MAHAPRABHU IN THE MOOD OF LORD RAMA

From Srila Lochan Das Thakur's
Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala śeṣa-khaṇḍa 1.115-123

As He traveled through South India, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was continually absorbed in the ecstasy of pure Krishna consciousness. Crossing the Godavari River, the Lord arrived in Panchavati where Sita, Rama and Lakshman once lived. Observing the beauty of Panchavati, Lord Gauranga became entranced in love and repeatedly called out, "Sri Rama! Lakshman!" Panchavati is the place where Lakshman stayed in a thatched hut, protecting Sitadevi, while Rama pursued the golden deer. The moment Lakshman left to search for Rama, the evil demon Ravana kidnapped Sitadevi. Seeing this place overwhelmed Lord Chaitanya with remembrances of His previous pastimes here. At one moment Gauranga yelled, "Kill! Kill! Kill!" The next moment He said, "Catch him! Catch him!" Then He loudly shouted the name of Lakshman. Remembering Sita, Gauranga cried

so deeply that His associates could do nothing to pacify Him. Finally, Mahaprabhu controlled Himself and became peaceful. ❧

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KIRTANA OF THE NAMES OF LORD RAMA

By the poet Govinda Das

(For more about Govinda Das see Bindu #25.)

(Dhānaśī-rāga)

jaya śiva sundara viśva parāt-para
paramānandānanda-kārī

Glory to You, O handsome auspicious Lord,
greatest of all great persons in the worlds, and
most delightful of delightful persons!

jaya jaya śrīla rāma raghunandana
janaka-sutā-rati-kānta
sura nara vānara khacara niśākara
yachu guṇa gāya ananta

Glory, glory to You, O handsome Lord Rama,
descendant of Raghu, beloved of Janaka's
daughter! Lord Ananta Sesh praises Your glo-
rious mercy to the demigods, humans, mon-
keys, witches, and night-roving demons! ❧

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the Inter-
national Society for Krishna Consciousness,
Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Quotations from the books, letters, and lectures of His
Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
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vided no changes are made to the contents.

durbādala nava śyāmala-sundara
kañja-nayana raṇa-vīra
vāme dhanur-dhara dāhine niśita śara
jaladhi koṭi gambhīra

Glory to You, O Lord, handsome and dark
like a new monsoon cloud, O lotus-eyed hero
on the battlefield! You hold a bow in Your left
hand and a sharp arrow in Your right hand!
Your wisdom is deeper than millions of oceans!

śrī-pada pāduka dharu bharatānuja
cāmara chatra nichoḍi
śiva caturānana sanaka sanātana
śatamukha raha kara-joḍi

Glory to You, O Lord whose sandals were
worshiped with a parasol and a cāmara whisk
by Your younger brother Bharata. Before You,
Shiva, Brahma, Sanaka, Sanatan, and hun-
dred-faced Ananta stand with folded palms!

bhakata ānanda māruta nandana
caraṇa-kamala karu sevā
govinda dāsa hṛdaye avadhāraṇa
hari nārāyaṇa devā

Glory to You, O bliss of the devotees, whose
lotus feet are served by Hanuman, the son of the
wind god! O Hari! O Narayan! O Supreme Lord!
The heart of Govinda Das is fixed on You! ❧

— Jagadbandhu Bhadra. *Gaura-pada-taraṅginī*. Sri
Gauranga Press. Calcutta. 1931. Bengali.

HEARING HIS OWN PASTIMES FROM A PREVIOUS AGE

Srila Rupa Goswami's Padyāvalī, text 151

rāmo nāma babhūva huṁ tad-abalā sīteti huṁ tām pitur
vācā pañcavatī-vane nivasatas tasyāharad rāvaṇaḥ
kṛṣṇāyeti purāṇānām nija-kathāṁ ākārṇya mātṛeritam
saumitre kva dhanur dhanur dhanur iti vyagrā girāḥ
pāntu-vaḥ

"There once was a king named Rama."

"Yes."

"His wife was Sita."

"Yes."

"On the order of His father, Rama lived in
the Panchavati forest. There Ravan kid-
napped Sita."

As Lord Krishna heard His mother narrate
His own activities performed in ancient times,
He suddenly called out: "Lakshman! Where
is My bow? Where is My bow? Where is My
bow?" I pray these alarmed words of Lord
Krishna may protect you all. ❧

— Adapted from the English translation by Kusakratha
Das. Krishna Library. Culver City, California. 1989.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 101 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

20 April 2005

Śrī Kāmadā Ekādaśī, 26 Viṣṇu, 518 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,517

Highlights

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• PURE DEVOTEES AND MATERIALISTIC SOCIETY

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• BOOK DISTRIBUTION IS NOT MUNDANE BUSINESS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• THE IMPORTANCE OF CHASTITY

Adapted from Padma Purāṇa Uttara-khaṇḍa 206.5-63

OUR MOST IMPORTANT WEAPONS

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

I am so glad to know that you and the others at ISKCON Press are doing such wonderful service with these books and magazines. These books and magazines are our most important propaganda weapons to defeat the ignorance of Maya's army. The more we produce such literature and sell them profusely all over the world, the more we shall deliver the world from the suicide course. So your work is the most important preaching work. May Krishna bless you more and more. Thank you for helping me in this way. ❀

— Letter to Jayadvaita, 18 November 1972.

PURE DEVOTEES AND MATERIALISTIC SOCIETY

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Do swanlike persons engage only in spiritual activities and neglect material activities? No. Swanlike persons worship Krishna in the mood of one who is enjoyed, and they boldly take care of the external body. Eating, sleeping, enjoying, traveling, exercising, protecting society, protecting the body, riding in vehicles, engaging in industrial enterprises, and walking in the open air are seen in the lives of swanlike persons.

(Śrī Krishna-saṁhitā, chapter 10/12)

The swanlike *vaiṣṇavas* valiantly remain and work among men. They are the shelter of women, and are respected by them. They take part in social activities and gain much experience. They teach their children *artha-śāstra*, and thus become known as headmasters.

(Śrī Krishna-saṁhitā, chapter 10/13)

— Sundarananda Vidyavinode. *Bhaktivinode-vāṇī-vaiḥbhava*. English translation by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

THE TEMPLE INSIDE THE BOOKS AND DEVOTEES

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada called his printing press *Bṛhat Mṛdāṅga* (the big clay drum). During *saṅkīrtan*, the sound of the ordinary clay drum (*mṛdāṅga*) can be heard only in the immediate vicinity. But the divine message of Sriman Mahaprabhu can be spread all over the world through the publication of books.

At the opening ceremony of the Bagbazar Gaudiya Math, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta said, "... to establish internal *hari-bhajan* in this world, quite a few books have to be written and published. The temple which is within the books and the temple which is within the devotees are more important than the temple built with bricks and stones, because by constructing such temples, *hari-kathā* can be preached in this world much longer."

Srila Saraswati Prabhupada had among his disciples a very talented team of writers and editors

who dedicated their lives to his publication mission. Among them were: Sripad Sundarananda Vidyavinode, Sripad Paramananda Vidyaratna, Sripad Bhaktisudhakar Prabhu (Professor Nishikant Sannyal), Srimad Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaja, Srimad Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaja, and Sripad Pranavananda Pratnaviyalankar (later Srimad Bhakti Pramod Puri Maharaja).

After the disappearance of Srila Saraswati Prabhupada, another name would be added to this list, that of Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, who published beautifully designed English translations of *Bhagavad-gītā* (as *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*), *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta sindhu* (as *Nectar of Devotion*), and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. These books would capture the hearts of thousands of people all over the world. ❀

— Page 36 from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing, Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

BOOK DISTRIBUTION IS NOT MUNDANE BUSINESS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: It is often said that one should not make a business out of the *Bhāgavatam*. If materialistic persons heard that, they could easily look at us and say this whole ISKCON society is based on selling *Bhāgavata*. It seems we are contradictory to our own preaching.

Gour Govinda Swami: Devotees sell the *Bhāgavata* book and thereby they give opportunity to people to serve Krishna or serve a pure devotee, *vaiṣṇava*. They take money from people in exchange for the *Bhāgavatam* and they utilize that money in the service of guru, *vaiṣṇava* and Krishna, and not for their sense gratification. Such devotees are not *vyavasāyīs*, businessmen. But *Bhāgavata-vyavasāyīs*, so-called pandits who speak on the *Bhāgavata* for money, and who upon obtaining that money use it for sense gratification — they are doing sinful activity. Devotees never do that. Their selling the *Bhāgavatam* is not a profession, a business. They are distributing mercy. My Guru Maharaja Srila Prabhupada said, “If someone simply gives money and takes *Bhāgavata*, even if he never reads it, if he just keeps it in his house, then he gets benefit, because *Bhāgavata* is non-different from Krishna — *kṛṣṇa tulya bhāgavata*.” Krishna and His *vāṇī* are non-different. So if he keeps Krishna in his house, then the day will come

when his son, or his son’s son, will read it and get benefit. This is not business. We are not doing business. We are distributing mercy. They cannot understand, so they say like that.

Devotee: What about the situation where one is a *gr̥hastha*? If he goes out and sells *Bhāgavata* or Krishna consciousness literatures to support his family, is that the same? Is that cheating?

Gour Govinda Swami: You should understand. A devotee, a *vaiṣṇava*, if he is a family man, his family is not an ordinary family. All of the members of his family are *vaiṣṇavas*. All of the relationships among them — husband and wife, father and son, friend and friend, master and servant — must be based on a relationship with Krishna. This is a *vaiṣṇava* family, *sādhū-saṁsāra*. Thereby he shows the public how to have a Krishna conscious household life and not a materialistic or illusory family life. *Kṛṣṇera-saṁsāra*, and not *māyāra-saṁsāra*. So that *gr̥hastha-vaiṣṇava*, householder devotee, must do some business for the service of Krishna or the maintenance of the devotees of Krishna. It is not for his sense gratification. This is a *gr̥hī-vaiṣṇava*. He is not an ordinary householder. He is *vaiṣṇava*.

Devotee: As long as he is following the principles.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. He never does anything for his own sense gratification. He does everything for the gratification of the senses of Krishna. He is a *vaiṣṇava*, but general people cannot understand it. In order to teach them, a *vaiṣṇava* becomes a *gr̥hastha*. By doing so, he shows how to maintain a family in Krishna consciousness. He shows how to make all the members of the family *kṛṣṇa-bhaktas*, how to serve Krishna. In other words, how to have Krishna conscious family life, *kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra*. “You have been doing *māyā-saṁsāra*, but now do *kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra*.” Therefore, a *sādhū* becomes a *gr̥hastha* to teach this thing. ❀

— Lecture, Bhubaneswar, 23 September 1989.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHASTITY

Adapted from Padma Purāṇa

Uttara-khaṇḍa 206.5-63

In his purport to Bhagavad-gītā 1.40, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada has written:

Good population in human society is the basic principle for peace, prosperity and spiritual progress in life. The varṇāśrama religion’s principles were so designed

that the good population would prevail in society for the general spiritual progress of state and community. Such population depends on the chastity and faithfulness of its womanhood. As children are very prone to be misled, women are similarly very prone to degradation. Therefore, both children and women require protection by the elder members of the family.

The following story narrated by Narada Muni to King Sibi from the Padma Purāṇa nicely illustrates this point:

In Kampilya there was a certain *brāhmaṇa* who looked as though he were Cupid personified. By his beauty and behavior, he attracted the hearts of all women. Skilled in the science of music, his voice was sweet like that of a cuckoo. That intelligent *brāhmaṇa* moved about the city, playing a lute and singing. Hearing his sweet singing, the wives of the citizens abandoned their domestic work and went to him. Fascinated by his handsome form, they could not bear the force of lust. Hearing his song, they became disturbed. What self-controlled and wise person is able to conquer Cupid, who created a longing for Saraswati in the mind of Brahma, and caused half of Shiva's body to be given to Parvati? Moreover, women are fickle by nature. Even the chaste ones are unable to tolerate the excitement caused by Cupid. Cupid is very difficult to conquer in this world.

Wherever that handsome *brāhmaṇa* went, singing and playing the lute, those ladies followed. Their husbands, sons, brothers, and fathers came there, and threatening them, took them back to their homes. When the ladies again approached that *brāhmaṇa*, the citizens reported everything to their king. The king called that *brāhmaṇa* and asked him in private, "O best *brāhmaṇa*, tell me by what charm you have fascinated the women in the city. Answer and I shall give you much wealth. Otherwise I shall drive you out of my kingdom."

Hearing these words of the king, that best *brāhmaṇa*, the ocean of handsomeness and virtues, spoke to him true words. "O king, I, a beggar, have neither a charm nor an herb. All of the women in your city have no control over their senses. It is they who upon seeing my handsome form and hearing my songs cannot tolerate the force of lust. O great king, what can I do? What is my fault?"

At that time all of the assembled citizens approached the king and said, "O king, this

brāhmaṇa has fascinated our wives. They no longer remain in their houses. They cannot be stopped by us. O lord, if this one who infatuates all women continues to live in this city, then today we shall all depart to other countries. O lord of men, we, abandoned by fortune, have no other shelter than you. Our wives follow him as female elephants follow their lord. How can the goddess of fortune remain in a vacant house? Piety, wealth and home all depend upon the piety of the wife. If she is gone, all three are lost."

The wives of the citizens then came before the king, sat, and began to speak to one another. "Upon seeing the charming form of this *brāhmaṇa*, our minds open like lotus flowers do upon seeing the lord of the day, the sun, and they close in his absence just as the white lotuses close without the moon. Come, together we shall seize and take this *brāhmaṇa* before the king. He is not fit to be killed, nor are we. What will the king do?" Saying so, they hurriedly seized that best of the *brāhmaṇas*, in front of the king, while their own husbands were watching. They said to that *brāhmaṇa*, "O lord of our minds, come to our house, and quickly pacify the agony tormenting our hearts. We cannot live without you."

The *brāhmaṇa* replied, "I am your son and you are my mothers. Leaving your homes, why are you wandering about? Serve your husbands. When their husbands are properly served, wives enjoy both the material and spiritual worlds, and Vishnu, the lord of the gods, is pleased. When the husband is pleased, what is difficult to obtain? A woman who forsakes her husband and resorts to another man with a desire for enjoyment, invites censure and goes to a fearful hell. She, the deceiver of her husband, lives there until the end of the *kalpa*. After that, she attains the state of an inanimate object. Then she takes birth as a beast for many lives. Following that, she is born as a cripple. Understanding the sinful reactions for this behavior, turn away from Cupid. Otherwise, at the end of your lives you will go to a very fearful hell. You will not obtain the pleasure that you desire from me."

Hearing his words and seeing the faces of their husbands, those ladies hung their heads with shame like creepers struck by a stormy wind. The terrible fire of lust of the women of the city was extinguished by the cold water of the words of that *brāhmaṇa*. Condemning Cupid as one who bewilders even gods like Brahma and Indra, they all got up and walked away.

The women said, “Fie upon committing sinful acts, an axe to the wood of good character! What should we say to the worshipable Rukmini, who carried this Rahu Cupid named Pradyumna in her womb, who eats the moon of the good character of women? If that cruel god comes within the range of our sight again, we shall throw him into the fire of the third eye of lord Shiva. That cruel one made Vishnu the lover of sixteen thousand women. What then can be said about us?”

Having thus censured Cupid, the women praised that best *brāhmaṇa* who preserved his own character and theirs also. “Blessed is the mother who gave birth to this excellent *brāhmaṇa*, who vanquished Cupid and preserved the virtue of others! Fie upon us who were laughed at by the king’s men, who were vanquished by Cupid, and by whom great sins were committed through speech and mind!” Thinking thus, the ladies returned to their respective homes. The king of Kampilya then honored that *brāhmaṇa* with garments and ornaments.

Shortly after that, the powerful king of Karusha attacked Kampilya with his armies. A great war took place in which the king of Kampilya was killed. The king of Karusha plundered the entire city and the citizens were killed everywhere. The women of that city drank *kālakūṭa* poison and died. Those ladies had not yet atoned for their sins of lusting after the *brāhmaṇa*. As a result,

they were all born as demonesses with huge bodies causing fear to all in the city of the demon Bhishan. All the women in that city were killed by Hanuman, occupying the banner of the chariot of Vishnu. Again they were born as demonesses on the path to Maru. They were oppressed by hunger and thirst, and caused fear at their sight. Thus due to their sins committed by speech and mind, they had to undergo two births as demonesses. Due to their sin the two cities [Kampilya and the city of the demon Bhishan] along with their kings were destroyed.

Therefore, women, fearing sin, should never resort to another lover even through speech or mind. Women desiring salvation should not desert their husband even if he is diseased, dull, poor or blind. This story thus describes the great sin produced by devotion to another man by means of speech or mind and the fruit of this sin obtained by these women. Finally, after receiving drops of sacred water from Dwarka on their heads, these women were freed from the bodies of *rākṣasīs*, corpse-eaters, and obtained the forms of heavenly damsels.

Yet our ācāryas have described that not all unchaste women are to be condemned. Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur writes in his purport to Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.47.59:

There are three types of adulterous women. The first is a woman who enjoys both her husband and a lover, being faithful to neither. Both ordinary society and the scriptures condemn this conduct. The second type of adulterous woman is she who abandons her husband to enjoy only with her lover. Society and the scriptures also condemn this behavior, although such a fallen woman may be said to at least have the good quality of dedicating herself to a single man. The last kind of adulterous woman is she who abandons her husband and enjoys in the attitude of being a lover of the Supreme Lord alone. Srila Viswanath Chakravarti explains that although the foolish, common people criticize this position, such behavior is commended by those who are wise in spiritual science. Therefore, learned members of society and the revealed scriptures praise such single-minded devotion to the Lord. Such was the gopīs’ behavior. Thus the term vyabhicāra-duṣṭāḥ, “corrupted by deviation,” indicates the apparent resemblance between the gopīs’ behavior and that of ordinary adulterous women.

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
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Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 102 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

May 4 2005 Śrī Varuthinī Ekādaśī, 10 Madhusudana, 519 Gaurābda Circulation 1,531

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By the medieval poet Gaurasundar Das

PREACHING MEANS CREATING A TASTE

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



This śraddhā has to be increased. Then when you come to the point of *ruci*, *vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ*, that is the beginning of our perfection. At the present moment, there is no *ruci*, no taste. There are so many exalted

persons, but they have no taste. They have lost all taste. The preachers could not preach properly to create taste in the people in general. It is not the fault of the people; it is the fault of the so-called preachers. Because they could not create taste, they wanted to take the place of Krishna. That was their purpose. Imitation of Krishna. Imitation of God. That will not do. You have to create taste. Just like Chaitanya Mahāprabhu did. Therefore when Srila Rupa Goswami first met Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, he offered this prayer: *namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te*, "You are the most munificent incarnation because you are giving Krishna (Cc. madhya 19.53). You are greater than

Krishna, "mahā-vadānyāya". Krishna asked everybody to surrender, but He did not give himself immediately. However, Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, He is also Krishna in the form of a devotee. He is giving Himself, "Take me!" without any price.

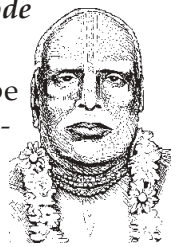
So *vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ* (Bhāg. 1.2.16). People should be educated how to increase their taste for understanding Krishna. This is the Krishna consciousness movement. Everyone should come forward and assist this movement. One should behave in a Krishna conscious way and then he will be able to make others Krishna conscious — not by theoretical knowledge, but by behavior, *āpani ācari' bhakti karila pracāra* (Cc. ādi 4.41). ॐ

— Lecture in Vrindavan, 27 October 1972.

FIVE CATEGORIES OF OFFENSES TO THE DEITIES

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode
Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta 3.3*

A *vaiṣṇava* should always be careful to avoid *sevā*- and *nāma-aparādhas*. According to the *Varāha* and *Padma Purāṇas*, *sevā-aparādhas* are of five types:



[next column](#) ॐ

- 1) *sādhyamata yatnābhāva* — negligence in spite of ability
- 2) *avajñā* — disrespect
- 3) *apavitrata* — impurity
- 4) *niṣṭābhāva* — lack of determination
- 5) *garva* — pride

All of the offenses mentioned in the scriptures that can be committed against the form of the Lord in the temple fall within these five types. It is difficult to list all the offenses, but those mentioned in the Varāha and Padma Purāṇas will be briefly described.

The following offenses are included within *sādhyamata yatnābhāva*, negligence in spite of ability: not to hold the regular festivals for the deity, although there is money to do so; to worship the Lord with inferior items, although ability is there to supply better; not to offer seasonal fruits to the Lord; to come before the Lord without offerings, obeisances, prayers or verses of praise; and to enter the Lord's temple without lighting any lamp [one should not enter the deity room in the dark].

Offenses included in the category of *avajñā*, disrespect, are: entering the deity room with shoes or in a vehicle; not paying respects to the deity; paying respects to the deity using one hand; pointing at the deity with a finger; circumambulating someone in front of the deity; spreading the feet before the deity; reciting prayers while sitting on a bed; sleeping or eating before the deity; speaking loudly before the deity; gossiping with someone in front of the deity; crying because of material affairs; quarreling; speaking of others in front of the Lord; passing air before the Lord; giving part of an item to someone before offering it to the Lord; sitting with one's back to the deity; addressing or greeting others before the deity; and seeing the deity at the wrong time.

Offenses in the category of *apavitrata*, impurity, are: going to the temple with an unclean body; serving the deity with clothing made of animal hair; spitting while serving the deity; and thinking of material things while serving the deity.

Offenses in the category of *niṣṭābhāva*, lack of determination, are: drinking water before worshiping the Lord; eating food or water that has not been offered; not daily seeing the Lord and his worship; not offering one's favorite items, foods, and fruits to the Lord; and not observing *ekādaśī* vows.

In serving the Lord, the devotee thinks of himself as the Lord's humble servant. Otherwise, the devotee will praise himself and think that he is the best worshiper. To think oneself great and offer many items with great pomp are offenses in the category of *garva*, pride.

In serving the Lord, these five types of offenses should be avoided. The installer of the deity, the *pujārī*, and the general devotees must all avoid them.

In his footnote to this section, Bhaktivinode quotes the following verses from Padma Purāṇa:

*sarvāparādha kṛd api mucyate hari saṁśrayaḥ
harer apy aparādhān yaḥ kuryād dvi-pada pāṁsanaḥ
nāmāśrayaḥ kadācit syāt taraty eva sa nāmataḥ
nāmno hi sarva suhṛdo hy aparādhāt pataty adhaḥ*

One who commits all offenses can be relieved of the reactions by taking shelter of Lord Hari, but if one commits an offense to Hari, that is very serious. If one takes shelter of the holy name, he can overcome the effects. But one who commits offenses against the name, who is the friend of all, must fall down. ❧

Bibliography

— Bhaktivinode Thakur. *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*. Sri Chaitanya Math. Mayapur. Bengali. Gaurabda 420.

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SWEET FRAGRANCE OF THE HOLY DHAM

From the Life of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Once a few disciples were accompanying Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada as he walked from the Chaitanya Math to the Yoga Pith. Unfortunately, people from Mayapur village were in the habit of using the sides of the road to go to the toilet. One of Prabhupada's dear disciples covered his nose with his cloth and showed signs of discomfort at the odor. Prabhupada laughed and said, "It seems that you cannot smell the sweet fragrance of the holy *dhāma*; only the mundane stink of this material world is entering your nose. You should not think of the *dhāma* as a mundane place; it is an extension of the Lord's own person."

He then quoted from Jiva Goswami's *Sandarbhās*:

*ekam eva tat parama-tattvaṁ svābhāvīkācintya-
śaktiā sarvadaiva svarūpa-tad-rūpa-vaibhava-jīva-
pradhāna-rūpeṇa caturdhāvatīṣṭhate*

“The one Supreme Truth is always manifested in four different ways by His inseparable inconceivable potency: as *svarūpa*, His original form; as *tad-rūpa-vaibhava*, His expansions or spiritual energy; as the *jīva* souls; and as the *pradhāna*, the material energy.” ❧

— Remembrance by Sri Srimad Bhakti Pramod Puri Maharaja. *Of Love and Separation*. Guardian of Devotion Press. 2001. San Jose, California.

THE DEPARTURE OF JAGANNATH MISHRA

Srila Murari Gupta's

Śrī Caitanya-carita Mahā-kavya 1.8.11-24

Listen to the sublime history of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. A mortal being who hears it with full faith becomes freed from the bondage of birth and death. While staying in the house of His guru, the victorious Lord, the husband of Saraswati, studied all the Vedas. Thereafter He began to teach His own students.

While Sri Gaura Hari was happily studying *Vedānta-sūtra* and the other scriptures, His most fortunate father, the exalted *brāhmaṇa* Jagannath Mishra, returned to the Lord's abode. By the will of providence, Jagannath became afflicted with a fever that plundered his very life force. Seeing that His father was in such a condition, Viswambhara Hari together with His mother brought His father to the bank of the Ganga, surrounded by devotees fully absorbed in *hari-kīrtana*.

Embracing His father's feet, Sri Hari addressed him in a voice choked with tears, “O venerable master, dear father, you are abandoning Me so suddenly. Where will you now go?”

His father eagerly drank through his ears his son's nectarean words, and replied, “I wholly dedicate You to the feet of Lord Raghunath.”

The host of the devas, including mighty Indra, appeared in the sky and the people on earth were immersed in *hari-saṅkīrtana*. That best of the twice-born entered the waters of the Ganga and abandoned his mortal coil. Taking his seat on a chariot of the celestials, he departed for Sri Hari's abode. He was an eternally liberated soul who had come by his own free will to benefit humanity by showing an example of pure paternal devotion.

When Jagannath Mishra had departed for the destination of perfected souls, Sachi Devi was deeply afflicted with grief. ❧

Surrounded by a group of women, she fell lamenting at the feet of her prabhu, as the female osprey laments for her lost mate. As the ocean of mercy, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu repeatedly grieved for His father. Tears cascaded down from His eyes and glistened on His chest, creating an illusion of a lustrous string of pearls. Although He was full of sadness, Prabhu was pacified by His kinsmen. Then He performed acts of purification to invoke an auspicious future for His father. All these were performed by *brāhmaṇas* according to the guidance of scripture.

Apparently dejected, the Lord, feeling very affectionate for His father, with His accumulated wealth brought clay pots and other pure ingredients to perform a *yajña* for his father's welfare. Afterwards, He honored each of the *brāhmaṇas* present according to their seniority and age.

Anyone who recites with attention this narration of the entrance of Sri Gauranga's father into the spiritual abode will also attain the divine Ganga at the time of death. Immediately giving up all contamination, he will attain the abode of Sri Hari. ❧

— Murari Gupta. *Śrī Caitanya-carita*. English translation by Sri Bhakti Vedanta Bhagavata Swami. Gaura Vani Press. Distributed by Nectar Books. Union City, Georgia. 1998.

ODE TO THE WEARERS OF KAUPINAS *Sripad Sankaracharya's* *Śrī Kaupīna-pañcaka-stotra*

*vedānta-vākyeṣu sadā ramanto
bhikṣāṇa-mātreṇa ca tuṣṭimantaḥ
viśokavantaḥ karuṇaikavantaḥ
kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ*

Fortunate are the *kaupīna* wearers! They always take pleasure in the words of Vedānta and are satisfied with whatever food can be obtained by begging. They are never unhappy, and they are merciful.

*mūlaṁ taroḥ kevalam āśrayantaḥ
pāṇi-dvayam bhoktum amantrayantaḥ
kanthām iva śrīm api kutsayantaḥ
kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ*

Fortunate are the *kaupīna* wearers! They live under trees and they eat whatever they can hold in their two hands. They revile even the goddess of fortune as if she were a useless rag. ❧

*dehādi-bhāvaṁ parimāṛjayanta
ātmanam ātmany avalokayantaḥ
nāntaṁ na madhyaṁ na bahiḥ smarantaḥ
kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ*

Fortunate are the *kaupīna* wearers! They have removed all false identification with the body and they see the supersoul within the self. They meditate on that which has no middle, end, or outside.

*svānanda-bhāve parituṣṭimantaḥ
saṁśānta-sarvendriya-dṛṣṭimantaḥ
ahar-niśaṁ brahmaṇi ye ramantaḥ
kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ*

Fortunate are the *kaupīna* wearers! They are always situated in transcendental bliss and their senses are peaceful. Day and night, they delight in *brahman*.

*pañcākṣaraṁ pāvanam uccarantaḥ
patiṁ paśūnāṁ hr̥ḍi bhāvayantaḥ
bhikṣāśaṇā dīkṣu paribhramantaḥ
kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ*

Fortunate are the *kaupīna* wearers! They recite the purifying five-syllable mantra [(om) *namo śivāya*], meditating on lord Shiva in their hearts as they wander in all directions begging alms. ॐ

— Translated by Sri Kusakratha Das and Sri Matsya Avatar Das.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
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Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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THE NABADWIP PASTIMES OF RADHA'S MASTER

By the medieval poet Gaurasundar Das

(Śrī-rāga)

*rādhā-nātha baḍa aparūpa līlā
kiśora kiśorī dui eka mile navadvīpe prakṛtiyā*

Radha's master enjoys very wonderful pastimes. In Nabadwip, a teenage boy and a teenage girl have joined together in a single form.

*rādhā-nātha baḍa aparūpa se
śrī-caitanya nāme hīna-jane dayā tapata-kāñcana de*

Radha's master is very wonderful. Now He calls Himself by the name Sri Chaitanya, is very merciful to the poor fallen souls, and has a form splendid like molten gold.

*rādhā-nātha saṅgī aparūpa tāra
nitāi advaita śrīvāsa svarūpa rāya rāmānanda āra*

Radha's master has wonderful companions, including Nitai, Advaita, Srivasa, Svarupa, and Ray Ramananda.

*rādhā-nātha ki kahiba tava raṅga
sanātana rūpa raghunātha lokanātha bhaṭṭa-yuga saṅga*

O master of Radha! How can I describe Your pastimes performed with Sanatan Goswami, Rupa Goswami, Raghunath Das Goswami, Lokanath Goswami, Raghunath Bhatta Goswami, and Gopal Bhatta Goswami?

*rādhā-nātha e saba bhakata meli
nā kailā kīrtana āveśe nartana prema-dāna kutuhali*

O master of Radha! Meeting with the devotees, You enjoy pastimes of *kīrtana*. You dance, overcome with ecstatic love, and create a great tumult, bestowing the gift of ecstatic spiritual love.

*rādhā-nātha baḍa abhāgiyā mui
se-kāle thākitu prema-dāna pāitu kena nā karila tui*

O master of Radha! I am very unfortunate. Why was I not present at that time to receive Your gift of ecstatic spiritual love?

*rādhā-nātha baḍa-i rahila duḥkha
janama ha-ila takhana nahila dekhite nā pā-inu sukha*

O master of Radha, I am very unhappy. I was not born at that time. I did not attain the happiness of seeing You.

*rādhā-nātha ki jāni kahite āmi
gaurasundara dāsera bharasā uddhāra karibā tumi*

O master of Radha, what do I know to speak about You? Gaurasundar Das simply has faith that You will deliver him. ॐ

— Jagadbandhu Bhadra. *Gaura-pada-taraṅginī*. Sri Gauranga Press. Calcutta. 1931. Bengali.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 103 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

20 May 2005

Śrī Mohinī Ekādaśī, 26 Madusudana, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,545

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GENIUS

*His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

A person is called a genius when he can refute any kind of opposing element with newer and newer arguments. In this connection there is a statement in *Padyāvalī* which contains the following conversation between Krishna and Radha. One morning, when Krishna came to Radha, Radha asked Him, "My dear Keshava, where is Your *vāsa* at present?" The Sanskrit word *vāsa* has three meanings: one meaning is residence, one meaning is fragrance, and another meaning is dress.

Actually Radharani inquired from Krishna, "Where is Your dress?" But Krishna took the meaning as residence, and He replied to Radharani, "My dear captivated one, at the present moment My residence is in Your beautiful eyes."

To this Radharani replied, "My dear cunning boy, I did not ask You about Your residence. I inquired about Your dress."

Krishna then took the meaning of *vāsa* as fragrance and said, "My dear fortunate one,

I have just assumed this fragrance in order to be associated with Your body."

Srimati Radharani again inquired from Krishna, "Where did You pass Your night?" The exact Sanskrit word used in this connection was *yāminyāmuṣitaḥ*. *Yāminyām* means "at night," and *uṣitaḥ* means "pass." Krishna, however, divided the word *yāminyāmuṣitaḥ* into two separate words, namely *yāminyā* and *muṣitaḥ*. By dividing this word into two, it came out to mean that He was kidnapped by *yāminī*, or night. Krishna therefore replied to Radharani, "My dear Radharani, is it possible that night can kidnap Me?" In this way He was answering all of the questions of Radharani so cunningly that He gladdened this dearest of the *gopīs*. ❀

— Nectar of Devotion chapter 13.

THE NECESSITY OF GURU

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

Question: Can one worship Krishna without being under the guidance of gurudeva?

Srila Prabhupada: Never. Our only aim in life is to cultivate Krishna consciousness.



[next column](#) ❀

This can only be done under the guidance or instruction of a devotee of Krishna. Sri Varshabhanavidevi (Srimati Radharani) is most favored by Krishna. Worshipping her is most favorable for worshipping Krishna. No one is more favorable than Sri Radha. Those who are very dear to Srimati Radharani are all our spiritual masters. We, the Gaudiya *vaiṣṇavas*, are the worshippers of Krishna, who belongs to Radharani. The Gaudiya *vaiṣṇavas* are more on the side of Radharani than on the side of Krishna. Sri Gurudeva is non-different from Srimati Radharani.

Only by getting the favor of the most favored is it possible to cultivate Krishna-consciousness. When one is not under the guidance of the most favored, one will not find anything favorable for the cultivation of Krishna consciousness or for the pursuit of Krishna's happiness. Instead, one will find that one's heart is dominated by the demonic desire for one's own happiness. One has to give up such tendencies, which are unfavorable for devotion, and one has to give up all pride and arrogance. A devotee can find all opportunity to serve Krishna only when he wants to serve Krishna under the guidance of gurudeva. But unfortunately, we have forgotten to make any effort to make Krishna happy; instead, we have become busy in pursuit of our own happiness.

Alas! Instead of making Krishna the head of our household, we are acting in the role of the householder and we have become attached to our family life. But if we want what is good for us, then we have to become careful while we are alive in this human body. Otherwise we will be deceived; we will miss our golden opportunity. ❀

— Mandala Publishing Group. *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*, page 93-94. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

THE SHORTCOMING IS NOT WITH GURU Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: It occurred to me when you were saying how Srila Prabhupada had many disciples that there was no shortcoming on the part of their bona-fide spiritual master.

Gour Govinda Swami: No. The shortcoming is with you. How will the disciple be benefited if he doesn't follow the instructions of guru, as it is, without deviation, without adding any deliberation or any twisting? Those who add some deliberation to the instruction of their spiritual master, Prabhupada, those who have twisted his instructions, they failed. They cannot get the mercy of the spiritual master. Do you understand me? The shortcoming is with you. The shortcoming is not with guru. That is the whole trouble. Nothing else. ❀

— Interview with the Prabhupada Benevolent Foundation, 17 August 1991.

THE NARASIMHA DEITY AT SHOBANADRI HILL

Agiripalli is a small town about 30 kilometers northeast of Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh India. It is famous for its deity of Lord Narasimha known as Shobanachalaswami. The hill at this place was known as Kalyanadri in *Satya-yuga*, Shobachala in *Tretā-yuga*, Svapnasaila in *Dvāpara-yuga*, and Shobanadri in *Kali-yuga*. "Palli" means "town", and "giri" means "hill". It is said that this town, Agiripalli, got its name because it was next to this hill Shobanadri. As Simhachalam is famous for its deity of Lord Narasimha, so is Agiripalli. For this reason, one of the names of Agiripalli is Dakshina Simhachalam, the Southern Simhachalam.

The *sthala-purāṇa*, the local ancient history of this place, is said to be a part of the *Brahmānda Purāṇa*. Therein the history of a king named Subhavrata is given. Subhavrata was given Narasimha mantra by the sage Sanatkumar. The king left his family and empire and went in search of a suitable place to perform penance. Finally, he came to the hill known as Shobanadri. There he meditated on Lord Vishnu for a long time. Pleased with his devotee, the Lord appeared before him and asked him to request a boon. King Subhavrata prayed that the Lord would permanently reside at that place along with his consort Goddess Lakshmi. The Lord agreed, and thus manifested himself at Shobanadri in his deity form.

There are two temples of Lord Narasimha at the Shobanadri hill, one at the foot of the hill and one on top, which is reached after climbing about 700 steps. The temple at the foot of the hill contains the deities of Sri Sri Lakshmi Narasimha. There are also small temples for Yogananda Lakshmi Narasimha, Rajyalakshmi, and the great Sri Vaishnavi lady Alwar and saint known as Andal. The temple at the top of the hill contains the deity known as Shobanachalswami Narasimha. He is said to be a self-manifested deity who appeared on a boulder inside the inner sanctum of the temple. This deity has the mouth of a tiger and the body of a man-lion.

There is an interesting story regarding the origin of the present Shobanachalswami temple. It is said that in a nearby village known as Viravalli there was a *vaiṣṇava* named Gopayacharyulu. He had a dream in which the Lord told him that his form of Narasimha in a temple on top of Shobanadri hill was long neglected and that he should find that temple and reinstate the worship there. Gopayacharyulu took a large number of people with him and they searched on top of the hill. While they were searching for the deity, they came face to face with a large tiger, who slowly retreated into a cave on the hill. Gopayacharyulu boldly entered the cave and in great happiness found the deity of the Lord. After some years, when Gopayacharyulu became too old to continue the worship of the deity, he turned it over to his son Shobanacharya. It is said that Shobanacharya became a great scholar after the Lord personally inscribed the *bījākṣaras*, seed letters of the alphabet, on his tongue. Shobanacharya became a well-known poet, and one of his books is called *Śobanāchala-śatakam*.

Once, Shobanacharya approached the Muslim Nawab of Hyderabad for money to renovate the temple. The Nawab became angry and told Shobanacharya to show his god to the Nawab, and that if he failed to do so the Nawab would have him trampled to death. Shobanacharya accepted this challenge. He prepared some pure butter mixed with sugar and

prayed to Lord Narasimha to kindly accept it. It is said that the Lord appeared in the form of a tiger and took the butter from the hands of Shobanacharya in the presence of a crowd of onlookers. The Nawab was stupefied and granted the Agiripalli village as an endowment for the maintenance of the temple. ❀

— Adapted from the book, *Sri Narasimha Avatara* by Dr. M. S. Rajajee. Published by Sri Ahobila Matha. 2002.

ALL GLORIES TO KRISHNA AND VRINDAVAN

Srila Narottama Das Thakur
A Song for Vraja-maṇḍala Parikramā
(Gurjarī-rāga)

jaya jaya madana gopāla vaṁśī-dhārī
tri-bhaṅga bhaṅgimā ṭhāma caraṇa-mādhurī

Glory, glory to Lord Madana-Gopal, the holder of the flute, whose threefold-bending form is the abode of handsomeness and grace, and whose feet are the abode of sweetness!

jaya jaya śrī-govinda-mūrti manohara
koṭi candra jini yāra varaṇa sundara

Glory, glory to the charming form of Lord Govinda, whose handsome splendor defeats millions of moons!

jaya jaya gopīnātha mahimā prabala
tamāla śyāmala aṅga pīna vakṣaḥ-sthala

Glory, glory to Lord Gopinatha of unparalleled greatness. His chest is broad and his limbs are dark like a *tamāla* tree!

jaya jaya mathurā-maṇḍala kṛṣṇa-dhāma
jaya jaya gokula yāra goloka ākhyāna

Glory, glory to the district of Mathura, Lord Krishna's abode! Glory, glory to Gokula, which is known to be Goloka, the eternal spiritual world!

jaya jaya dvādaśa vana kṛṣṇa-līlā-sthāna
śrī-vana lauha bhadra bhāṇḍīra vana nāma

Glory, glory to Krishna's pastime places, the twelve forests of Vraja, including Srivan, Lauhavana, Bhadravana, and Bhandiravan!

mahāvane mahānanda pāya vraja-vāsī
yāhāte prakṛta kṛṣṇa svarūpa prakāśī

Glory to Mahavan, where the people of Vraja attain great bliss and where Lord Krishna reveals his eternal form in this world.

jaya jaya tālavana khadira bahulā
jaya jaya kumuda kāmyaavane kṛṣṇa-līlā

Glory, glory to Talavan, Khadiravan, and Bahulavan! Glory, glory to Kumudavan and Kamyavan, where Lord Krishna enjoys pastimes!

*jaya jaya madhuvana madhu-pāna-sthāna
yāñhā madhu-pāne matta hailā balarāma*

Glory, glory to Madhuvan, the place of drinking honey! Lord Balaram becomes intoxicated by drinking honey here.

*jaya jaya sarva-śreṣṭha śrī-vṛndāvana
devera agocara sthāna kandarpa-mohana*

Glory, glory to Sri Vrindavan, the best of all forests, which is unknown to the demigods and bewildering even to Cupid.

*jaya jaya lalitā-kunḍa jaya śyāma-kunḍa
jaya jaya rādhā-kunḍa pratāpa pracaṇḍa*

Glory, glory to Lalita-kund! Glory to Shyama-kund! Glory, glory to the supremely glorious Radha-kund!

*jaya jaya mānasa-gaṅgā jaya govardhana
jaya jaya dāna-ghāṭa līlā sarvottama*

Glory, glory to Manasa-ganga! Glory to Govardhana! Glory, glory to Dana-ghat, where the Lord enjoys the most sublime pastimes!

*jaya jaya nanda-ghāṭa jaya akṣaya-vaṭa
jaya jaya cīra-ghāṭa yamunā nikāṭa*

Glory, glory to Nanda-ghat! Glory to Akshaya-vat! Glory, glory to Cira-ghat, just near the Yamuna!



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*jaya jaya keśi-ghāṭa parama mohana
jaya vaṁśī-vaṭa rādhā-kṛṣṇa manorama*

Glory, glory to Keshi-ghat, which is supremely charming! Glory to Vamsi-vat, which delights the hearts of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna!

*jaya jaya rāma-ghāṭa parama nirjana
yāñhā rāsa-līlā kaila rohiṇī-nandana*

Glory, glory to Rama-ghat, which is very secluded! It is there that the son of Rohini, Lord Balaram, enjoys the *rāsa* dance.

*jaya jaya vimala-kunḍa jaya nandīśvara
jaya jaya kṛṣṇa-keli pāvana-sarovara*

Glory, glory to Vimala-kund! Glory to Nandishwar! Glory, glory to Pavana-sarovar, where Lord Krishna enjoys many pastimes!

*jaya jaya yāvaṭa grāma abhimanyālaya
sakhī saṅge rā-i yāñhā sadā virājaya*

Glory, glory to Yavat-gram, Abhimanyu's home! Radha and Her friends are gloriously manifest there always.

*jaya jaya vṛṣabhānu-pura nāme grāma
jaya jaya saṅkeṭa rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā-sthāna*

Glory, glory to the village named Vrishabhanu-pura! Glory, glory to Sanket, where Radha and Krishna enjoy many pastimes!

*śrī-guru-vaiṣṇava-pāda-padma kari āśa
nāma saṅkīrtana kahe narottama dāsa*

Desiring only the lotus feet of the spiritual master and the *vaiṣṇavas*, Narottam Das sings this song of holy names. ॐ

— *Vaiṣṇava Padāvali*. Published by Reflex Publishers. Edited by Kanchana Basu. Calcutta. Bengali. 1995.

ETIQUETTE IN HEARING

Śrī Śīva Purāṇa 1.6.49-50

*ye nindanti ca vaktāraṁ kathāraṁ cemāraṁ surāvanīm
bhavanti śunakā bhuktvā duḥkhaṁ janma-śataṁ hi te*

Those who speak ill of the speaker or of the sacred story are born as dogs and lead miserable lives in a hundred births.

*kathāyām vartamānāyām dūrvādāṁ ye vadanti hi
bhuktvā te narakāndhorān-bhavaṁti gardabhāstataḥ*

Those who argue and dispute while the discourse is being held fall into hell. After undergoing the tortures there, they are reborn as donkeys. ॐ

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 104 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

2 June 2005

Śrī Aparā Ekādaśī, 10 Trivikrama, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,549

Highlights

• STICKING TO THE DUST OF VRINDAVAN

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• BHAKTI AND VARNASRAMA DHARMA

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Śrī Chaitanya-śīkṣāmṛta 3.4

• SEEING NON-DEVOTEES AS DEVOTEES

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

STICKING TO THE DUST OF VRINDAVAN

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

What is the meaning of living in Vrindavan?
bhakta-sane vāsa — To be in the soci-



ety of devotees. One should come here for developing a devotional attitude, and not for making business or money. If anyone comes for that reason, he makes offense.

It is called *dhāma-aparādhā*, offense to the holy *dhāma*. There are many kinds of *aparādhās*, offenses: *dhāma-aparādhās*, *nāma-aparādhās* and *sevā-aparādhās*. That is described in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Here in Vrindavan *dhāma*, no one should do business. No one should try to satisfy his senses in Vrindavan *dhāma*. Then his living in Vrindavan will actually be profitable. Of course, anyone living in Vrindavan *dhāma* is fortunate because the *dhāma* has its own power. But *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam* [Cc. madhya 19.167] — if we live in the *dhāma* in an *ānukūla* way, a favorable way, then our achievement of ultimate success is very easy. If we commit offenses then it will be delayed. But still, anyone who is some way or other living in Vrindavan, sticking to the dust of Vrindavan, is certainly benefited. ❀

— Lecture on Nectar of Devotion. Vrindavan. 13 November 1972.

BHAKTI AND VARNASRAMA DHARMA

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Śrī Chaitanya-śīkṣāmṛta 3.4

(with footnotes as in original)

What is the relationship of *varṇāśrama*, which was previously discussed, with *vaidhi-bhakti*? Should a person take shelter of *vaidhi-bhakti* and give up the rules of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or should he practice *vaidhi-bhakti* for developing devotion while still following the *varṇāśrama* rules and duties? It was previously stated that the purport of *varṇāśrama-dharma* is to maintain the body, develop the mind, perform good works for society, and learn spiritual topics, all with the goal of developing pure *bhakti*.¹

¹ *etat saṁsūcitam brahmaṁs tāpa-traya-cikitsitam
yad īśvare bhagavatī karma brahmaṇi bhāvitam*

O *Brāhmaṇa* Vyasadev, it is decided by the learned that the best remedial measure for removing all troubles and miseries is to dedicate one's activities to the service of the Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead [Sri Krishna].

*āmāyo yaś ca bhūtānāṁ jāyate yena suvrata
tad eva hy āmayam dravyam na punāti cikitsitam*

O good soul, does not a thing applied therapeutically cure a disease caused by that very same thing?

*evam nṛṇāṁ kriyā-yogāḥ sarve saṁsṛti-hetavaḥ
ta evātma-vināśāya kalpante kalpitāḥ pare*

Thus, when all a man's activities are dedicated to the service of the Lord, those very activities that

Since man is bound by a material body, he must follow the *varṇāśrama* rules. That cannot be denied, for without the development of body, mind, society and spirit, man's life becomes degraded. The rules of *varṇāśrama* are suitable for this purpose, and therefore they should be followed. However, *varṇāśrama* is not the final goal. With the assistance of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, a person should cultivate *bhakti*. It is also necessary to follow the rules of *varṇāśrama* in the cultivation of *bhakti*.

But by following the rules of *varṇāśrama*, which are time consuming, a person may not have any time left to cultivate *bhakti*.² Furthermore, where there is some conflict of principles, what should be done? First, it should be said that without taking proper care of body, mind, society and spirit, a person cannot perform the more elevated activities of *bhakti*. How can the seed of devotion, faith, awaken in the heart if a person dies prematurely, develops mental problems, or never learns anything about spirit? And if a person gives up the rules of *varṇāśrama* and acts as he pleases, his physical and mental actions will be like those of a madman. He will be engaged in the worst sins. No sign of *bhakti* will be visible.

Thus, though *varṇāśrama-dharma* is somewhat engaging, it must be followed as an assistant to *bhakti*, and with the cultivation of *bhakti* its consumption of time will decrease.³ Its various

caused his perpetual bondage become the destroyer of the tree of work.

*yad atra kriyate karma bhagavat-paritoṣaṇam
jñānaṁ yat tad adhūnaṁ hi bhakti-yoga-samanvitam*

Whatever work is done here in this life for the satisfaction of the mission of the Lord is called *bhakti-yoga*, or transcendental loving service to the Lord, and what is called knowledge becomes a concomitant factor.

*kurvāṇa yatra karmāṇi bhagavac-chikṣayāsakṛt
grṇanti guṇa-nāmāni kṣṇasyānusmaranti ca*

While performing duties according to the order of Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one constantly remembers Him, His names, and His qualities. (*Bhāg.* 1.5.32-36)

² *na hy anto 'nanta-pārasya karma-kāṇḍasya coddhava
saṅkṣiptaṁ varṇayīṣyāmi yathāvad anupūrvāśaḥ*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, there is no end to the innumerable Vedic prescriptions for executing deity worship; so I shall explain this topic to you briefly, one step at a time. (*Bhāg.* 11.27.6)

³ *śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt
svabhāva-niyataṁ karma kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam*

It is better to engage in one's own occupation, although one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept

activities will transform into devotional actions. First a person should practice the five types of devotional activities to the utmost, as directed by Lord Chaitanya [associating with devotees, chanting the holy name, hearing Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, residing in Mathura, and worshiping the deity, as listed in *Cc. madhya* 22.128 — Ed.], while simultaneously being meticulous in observance of *varṇāśrama* duties, which may take too much time. He should gradually reject those *varṇāśrama* duties that are against devotional principles. Finally, being purified by *bhakti*, *varṇāśrama* duties will become the servant of *sādhana-bhakti*. Acting it this way, there will be no conflict between the duties of *varṇāśrama* and *bhakti*. By the cultivation of *bhakti*, the life of a *brāhmaṇa* and the life of a *śūdra*, both purified by *bhakti*, become equalized. The *śūdra*, being illumined by his state of servitude to the Lord and to the devotees, becomes equal to the selfless *brāhmaṇa*. The purity of *vaiṣṇava* unity will enlighten the lives of the four *varṇas* so much that the world will seem to be Vaikuntha. By removal of the obstacles arising from bodily identification, real equality of the souls is possible.⁴

Just as atheistic moral dharma merges with theistic moral life, *varṇāśrama-dharma*, so theistic moral life transforms itself and becomes devoid of its previous faults in the life of a devotee. In *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the worship of the Lord is only one among many rules. When this dharma is incorporated in the life of a devotee, all the rules becomes subordinate to the worship of the Lord. Although this change may seem very general, when faith becomes strong the whole life of the person becomes transformed. The lives of a *varṇāśrama* follower and a devotee are completely different.

According to the scriptures, every human being has a qualification for performing *bhakti*.⁵

another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Duties prescribed according to one's nature are never affected by sinful reactions. (*Bg.* 18.47)

⁴ *brāhmaṇe pukkase stene brahmaṇye 'rke sphuliṅgake
akrūre krūrake caiva sama-dṛk paṇḍito mataḥ*

Such a man sees equally the *brāhmaṇa* and the outcaste, the thief and the charitable promoter of *brahminical* culture, the sun and the tiny sparks of fire, the gentle and the cruel. (*Bhāg.* 11.29.14)

⁵ *na hy acyutaṁ prīṇayato bahv-āyāso 'surātmajāḥ
ātmatvāt sarva-bhūtānāṁ siddhatvād iha sarvataḥ*

My dear sons of demons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayan, is the original Supersoul, the

As devotion is the natural propensity of the soul, all attention should be paid to this matter. Thus, all persons in the four *varṇas* and *āśramas* are qualified for *bhakti*. Of course, as people outside the *varṇas* are also counted as human beings, they have a right to devotion as well, but the opportunities are less. Because their birth, association, actions, and nature are all without proper regulation, they are extremely attached to the material modes, and live like animals. Just to fill their stomach, they become selfish, violent towards others, and devoid of compassion. Because their hearts are hard, *bhakti* becomes difficult for them to appreciate.⁶ Examples like Haridas Thakur, the hunter saved by Narada, and the story of Jesus and Paul, show that such people do have qualification for devotion. By examining their lives however, it will be found that they endured many hardships in taking up the path of devotion, so much so that their life spans were considerably shortened.

Though all humans have a right to practice *bhakti*, those who follow the regulations of *varṇāśrama* have a much easier time. But even though the qualification and

father of all living entities. Consequently, there are no impediments to pleasing Him or worshiping Him under any conditions, whether one be a child or an old man. The relationship between the living entities and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always a fact, and therefore there is no difficulty in pleasing the Lord. (*Bhag.* 7.6.19)

⁶ *sukham aindriyakam daityā deha-yogena dehinām
sarvatra labhyate daivād yathā duḥkham ayatnataḥ*

Prahlad Maharaja continued: My dear friends born of demoniac families, the happiness perceived with reference to the sense objects by contact with the body can be obtained in any form of life, according to one's past fruitive activities. Such happiness is automatically obtained without endeavor, just as we obtain distress.

*tat-prayāso na kartavyo yata āyur-vyayaḥ param
na tathā vindate kṣemaṁ mukunda-caraṇāmbujam*

Endeavors merely for sense gratification or material happiness through economic development are not to be performed, for they result only in a loss of time and energy, with no actual profit. If one's endeavors are directed toward Krishna consciousness, one can surely attain the spiritual platform of self-realization. There is no such benefit from engaging oneself in economic development. (*Bhāg.* 7.6.3-4)

opportunity is there, many *varṇāśrama* followers do not take to *bhakti*.⁷

The reason is that man's life takes the form of ascending steps. Those outside the *varṇāśrama* are on the lowest step. Atheistic moralists are on the second step. Theistic moralists are on the third step. *Vaidha-bhaktas* are on the fourth step, and *rāgānuga-bhaktas* are on the fifth step. It is the nature of the soul to ascend to the next higher step, but he should not ascend prematurely or too quickly. Only after being firmly established on one step is it possible to ascend to the next step. That is why being qualified with steadiness on each level has been emphasized. When a person is qualified to ascend to the next step, he must also give up attachment to the old step. The tendency to cling to the old stage is called *niyamāgraha*, clinging to outmoded rules. Because of this, the outcastes have no respect for the atheistic moralists; the atheistic moralists have no respect for the pseudo-theistic moralists; the pseudo-theists have no respect for the theistic moralists; the theistic moralists have no respect for the *vaidha-bhaktas*; and the *vaidha-bhaktas* have no respect for *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. Because of such habit, the followers of *varṇāśrama* often do not respect the *vaidha-bhaktas*.⁸ This does not affect *bhakti* itself, but it is a misfortune for those who do

⁷ *yan-nāmadheyam mriyamāṇa āturaḥ
patan skhalan vā vivaśo gr̥ṇan pumān
vimukta-karmārgala uttamām gatim
prāpnoti yakṣyanti na taṁ kalau janāḥ*

Terrified, about to die, a man collapses on his bed. Although his voice is faltering and he is hardly conscious of what he is saying, if he utters the holy name of the Supreme Lord he can be freed from the reaction of his fruitive work and achieve the supreme destination. But still people in the age of Kali will not worship the Supreme Lord. (*Bhāg.* 12.3.44)

⁸ *viprād dvi-ṣaḍ-guṇa-yutād aravinda-nābha-
pādāravinda-vimukhāt śvapacāṁ varīṣṭham
manyate tad-arpita-mano-vacanehitārtha-
prāṇam punāti sa kulam na tu bhūrīmānaḥ*

If a *brāhmaṇa* has all twelve of the *brahminical* qualifications [as they are stated in the book called [*Sanat-sujāta*]] but is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee who is a dog-eater but who has dedicated everything — mind, words, activities, wealth and life — to the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee is better than such a *brāhmaṇa* because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called *brāhmaṇa* in a position of false prestige cannot purify even himself. (*Bhāg.* 7.9.10)

not take up interest in their own advancement. Those at a higher stage naturally have compassion for those at a lower stage, but until the lower-situated people are fortunate, they cannot give up their stage and develop a taste for the higher stage.

When the consciousness of those situated in *varṇāśrama* matures into devotional sentiment, they take up the life of a devotee. But as long as they do not, they must still be said to be practicing karma. Karma is not an integral part (*aṅga*) of *bhakti*. When karma matures fully, it takes the form of devotional action, and this is called *bhakti*, not karma. The moment that real faith in the Lord arises, a person transcends karma. The *sandhyā* rites are obligatory activities arising out of the rules of moral dharma. They are not activities of *bhakti* arising from faith. When faith in the Lord arises, all the activities, being centered on the Lord, are given respect according to their contribution to the goal, *bhakti*. Thus, if a devotee is listening to a devotional lecture in the evening, he does not like to interrupt that to perform his *sandhyā* rites. The devotee understands that there is no necessity for giving up an activity that is already fulfilling the goal of *sandhyā* rites. ❧

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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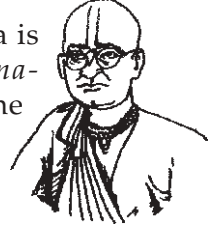
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SEEING NON-DEVOTEES AS DEVOTEES

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada

Question: Is it proper to think of a non-devotee as a devotee?

Answer: No. Sri Gurudeva is *nāmācārya*; he is *śrī-nāma-kīrtana-kari*, the chanter of the holy name. One who is an offender to the holy name should not be considered guru. A bona fide guru does not make provision for anyone's sense gratification, nor does he say anything with the purpose of pleasing anyone. One who is on the path of pleasure does not like the words of those who are on the path of the highest goal. Such people are in search of some gratification; that is why they are deprived of what is beneficial.



To think of a non-devotee as a devotee and to think of false devotion as devotion is only self-deception. When one does not have the good fortune of serving or honoring a devotee, then he has this desire to accept a non-devotee as a devotee. But can a crow become a peacock by attaching some peacock feathers to its body? Can a disguised jackal become a lion, the king of beasts? How long can this deceitful trick be covered up? The truth will always be manifest. Those who serve Krishna are not weak. They alone are strong and determined. Only by one's good fortune can one understand that the highest thing is devotional service to Krishna, that only a servitor of Krishna is truly great. Due to attachment to the external, one can admire someone's petty pride in money, or insignificant pride in education, or meaningless pride in beauty, and then one will be in great danger due to one's indifference to the service and servitor of Krishna. ❧

— Mandala Publishing Group. *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*, page 98-99. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 105 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

18 June 2005

Śrī Nirjjala Ekādaśī, 26 Trivikram, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation, 1567

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• THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SRIVAS PANDIT

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• THE MERCY OF GURU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

A DEVOTEE'S GREATEST ENEMY

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Devotee: Prabhupada, what is a devotee's greatest enemy?

Prabhupada: He himself. Because he is a rascal, he is his own greatest enemy. Give up this rascaldom, and you will become your friend. Nobody is

your enemy. You are your own enemy. ❧

— Morning walk conversation in Paris on 12 June 1974.

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SRIVAS PANDIT

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur's

Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata antya 5.38-64

One day, in private, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu asked Srivas about his livelihood. "I see that you never go anywhere. How do you maintain your family? How will you maintain them in the future?"

Srivas replied, "Lord, in my heart there is no desire to go anywhere."

Mahaprabhu said, "You have a big family. If you don't do anything, what will happen to them?"

Srivas said, "Whatever is destined will happen. That will come."

The Lord said, "You should accept *sannyāsa*." "I have no power to do that."

"If you won't accept *sannyāsa*, why do you not go out to beg alms? How will you feed your family? I don't understand your words. If you never go anywhere, you will not get anything. If nothing comes to your door, what will you do then? Please tell Me."

Srivas then clapped his hands three times and said, "One. Two. Three. That is my explanation."

"What does, 'One. Two. Three.' mean? Why did you clap your hands? Please explain."

"This is my solemn vow: If three times food does not come to me, and I must fast, then I will tie a waterpot around my neck and drown myself in the Ganga."

Hearing Srivas' words, Mahaprabhu at once stood up and roared. "Srivas Pandit! What are you saying? Why should you fast three times? Even if some day Goddess Lakshmi becomes poverty-stricken and has to beg alms, poverty still will not enter your house. Srivas, have you forgotten what I said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22):

*ananyās cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

To those who always worship me with exclusive devotion, meditating on my transcendental form, to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.

To further explain, Mahaprabhu spoke as follows:

*ye-ye-jana cinte more ananya ha-iyā
tāre bhikṣā deṇa muṇa mātḥāya bahiyā*

To anyone who always meditates on me with exclusive devotion, I carry alms for them on my head. (57)

*yei more cinte, nāhi yāya karo dvāre
āpane āsiyā sarva-siddhi mile tāre*

Anyone who meditates on me need never leave his door. All perfections will come to him automatically. (58)

*dharma-artha-kāma-mokṣa — āpane āise
tathāpiha nā cāya na laya mora dāse*

Piety, wealth, happiness, and liberation will come to him. My servant need not ask for them. They will never leave my servant. (59)

*mora sudarśana-cakre rākhe mora dāsa
mahāpralaye yāra nāhika vināśa*

My Sudarsana-chakra will always protect My servant. Even when all the universes are destroyed, he will not perish. (60)

*ye mohāra dāsere karaye smarāṇa
tāhāreo karoṇ muṇi poṣaṇa-pālana*

Whoever remembers my devotee, I will feed and protect. (61)

*sevakera dāsa se mohāra priya baḍa
anāyāse se-i se mohāre pāya daḍha*

The servant of my servant is very dear to me. Without even trying, he easily attains me. (62)

*kon cintā mora sevakera bhakṣya kari
muṇi yāra poṣṭā āchoṇ sabāra upari*

Why should he worry about food. I personally feed my servant. (63)

*sukhe śrīnivāsa, tumi vasi' thāka ghare
āpani āsibe saba tomāra dūyāre*

Srivas, you happily stay where you are. I will bring everything to your door. (64) ❀

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THE MERCY OF GURU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

How can we get mercy of Bhagavan? It is said, *guru-kṛpā hi kevalam* — guru's mercy is everything. The bona fide guru, spiritual master, *sad-guru*, is a *gaura-priya-jana* — a very dear devotee of Gauranga. He is *mukunda-preṣṭhā*, an intimate, confidential associate of Bhagavan Mukunda. This is *guru-tattva*. If such a guru is pleased with a disciple, then Krishna is pleased. This is the only way to please Krishna.

Spiritual Power

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

If the guru is displeased, then everything is finished. No one can protect you. You have no place to go. Even Lord Hari or Krishna cannot protect you. So, guru should be pleased. That is *guru-kṛpā hi kevalam*. The mercy of guru is so powerful.

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

By the mercy of the guru, even a dumb man can become the greatest orator, and even a lame man can cross mountains.

If someone is fortunate and pleases guru through service — *guru-śuśrūṣayā* — he receives such spiritual power. This is spiritual power, spiritual strength, the strength of Balaram. “Bala” means “strong”. Balabhadra Balaram is very strong. He has great spiritual strength. That strength comes to us by the mercy of guru. Guru is the manifestation of Balaram, Nityananda Rama. That is *guru-tattva*. Without the mercy of guru, no one can get such strength, and no one can make any advancement on the spiritual path, *bhakti-patha*.

Even when the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes, he also accepts a guru. Why does he do so? There is no need of him to accept guru. He does so to teach us. In *Gītā* (4.11), Krishna says, *mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ* ॥ “O Partha, O son of Kunti, Arjuna, everyone follows my path in all respects. Therefore when the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes, he accepts guru. Otherwise the common people will never accept guru. When Mahāprabhu came, he accepted guru. Krishna and Balaram accepted Sandipani Muni as guru. They were students, *brahmacārīs* in Sandipani Muni's ashram. Sudama Vipra was also a student at the same time when Krishna and Balaram were students, so they were friends from boyhood. When Sudama Vipra came to Dwarka, Krishna remembered those days in the guru's ashram, and said (*Bhāg.* 10.80.32):

*sa vai sat-karmanām sāksād dvijāter iha sambhavaḥ
ādyo 'ṅga yatrāśramiṇām yathāham jñāna-do guruḥ*

“My dear friend, he who gives a person his physical birth is his first spiritual master, and he who initiates him as a twice-born *brāhmaṇa* and engages him in religious duties is indeed

more directly his spiritual master. But the person who bestows transcendental knowledge upon the members of all the spiritual orders of society is one's ultimate spiritual master. Indeed, he is as good as my own self."

Kill your Mother

In this material world, the father is one of the gurus because by the mercy of father we have gotten this human body. So, the father is the first guru. One should accept the guru's order as it is. Don't add any deliberation to it, *nirvicāra-graha*. Accept it as it is and execute it immediately. Then you will get mercy. The example is Parasuram. Parasuram's father Jamadagni said, "Chop off the head of your mother Renuka." So immediately Parasuram chopped off her head with his axe. He didn't think, he didn't add any deliberation, "Oh, I'll kill my mother? I will commit such a great offence, *mātra-hatyā*?" Immediately he chopped off her head. And he is an incarnation of the Lord.

Devotee: At what stage in our devotional life can we follow such an order? An ordinary devotee cannot do so.

Gour Govinda Swami: You should follow guru's instruction at any stage. Then you will get his mercy.

Devotee: But when the devotee is full of doubts and his heart is not clean, then how can he follow?

Gour Govinda Swami: Who will clarify those doubts? Only guru can clarify doubts — *sarva-saṁśaya-saṁcchettānalaso gurur āhṛtaḥ* [*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 1.46].

Devotee: But can the devotee see guru?

Gour Govinda Swami: He cannot see guru. How can he see guru with defective vision?

Devotee: Then how can he follow guru's orders?

Cry to Krishna

Gour Govinda Swami: Therefore, we say *kṛṣṇa kṛpā ei guru mile*. Pray to Krishna. Krishna is there in the heart as *caitya-guru*, *paramātmā*. When one cries in one's heart, "How can I accept the lotus feet of my guru, I don't know who is my guru. O Krishna, please help me. I want to serve you. I am your servant. But without guru I can't serve you." If someone cries before Krishna in this way, then Krishna makes arrangement. By the arrangement of *paramātmā*, Krishna, Dhruva met guru. That is the only process. Therefore,

we say that by the arrangement of Krishna one will get a bona fide guru. Otherwise, by your own arrangement you cannot get.

When you accept such a bona fide guru, *sad-guru*, then everything is finished. Whatever the guru says, do it blindly. Don't add any deliberation. That is for your spiritual benefit. If you add some deliberation, then you cannot get the mercy of guru. You cannot get the mercy of Krishna.

Lord Ramachandra

An example is Lord Rama. Dasaratha ordered Lord Rama to go to the forest for 14 years. Immediately he executed that order. He didn't ask, "What is my fault? I would have been king, why should I go?" He didn't ask anything. Immediately, without adding any deliberation to it, one should execute the order of guru. He went to the forest. When Bharat came and heard about everything, he could understand that it was the politics of his mother Kaikeyi. So Bharat went to meet Rama and requested Him, "Please come back. I cannot sit on the throne. The throne belongs to you. I am your servant. I am not king. I won't be king. This is all politics of my mother Kaikeyi."

Lord Rama wouldn't return. He said, "Bharat, you should understand that whatever is *gurujana's* order, one should follow it, execute it as it is, without adding any deliberation to it. That is beneficial to you and to Me." Lord Rama said like that.

Krishna told Sudama Vipra (*Bhāg.* 10.80.32):

*sa vai sat-karmanām sākṣād dviṣāter iha sambhavaḥ
ādyo 'nga yatrāśramiṇām yathāham jñāna-do guruḥ*

"In the material world, he from whom the *jīva* gets a human body, that father is the first guru. He is *gurujana*. Later, one goes to *gurukula* and accepts a spiritual master who imparts Vedic knowledge to him, *jñāna-do*. That is the second guru. And that guru is as good as myself."

*ācāryam mām vijānīyān navamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāśūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

Krishna says to Uddhava in the 11th canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27), "That *ācārya* is as good as myself. One should not think him as an ordinary human being. *sarva-deva-mayaḥ* — all the demigods are there in his body. He should be worshiped as Krishna is worshiped. Krishna says, *ādyo 'nga yatrāśramiṇām yathāham jñāna-do guruḥ* — "Whoever imparts

this transcendental knowledge to the inmates of the ashram, he is my representative. He is as worshipable as I am.” Krishna then told Uddhava (*Bhāg.* 10.80.33-34):

*nanv artha-kovidā brahman varṇāśrama-vatām iha
ye mayā guruṇā vācā taranty añjo bhavārṇavam*

“O my dear friend Sudama Vipra, in this human society, one who is an intelligent human being should follow the orders of the spiritual master without any deliberation. Then he will very easily cross over this dreadful ocean of materialistic existence.

*nāham iṣyā-prajātibhyāṁ tapasopāśamena vā
tuṣyeyāṁ sarva-bhūtātmā guru-śūśrūṣayā yathā*

“I am very pleased with that person who serves the guru at any cost. Who serves guru with *kāyena*, *manasā*, *vācā* † body, mind, and speech. With whatever merit, intelligence, wisdom, and wealth — whatever he has, he only uses it to serve and please guru. I am very much pleased with one who serves guru — *guru-śūśrūṣayā*.”

Krishna told Sudama, “I am not so pleased with a person who very strictly follows the principles of *brahmacarya*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, or *sannyāsa-dharma*, as I am pleased with a person who serves guru and pleases him. Therefore we say, *yasya prasādād*



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

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National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

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Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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*bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto
‘pi [Śrī Guro-aṣṭaka text 8].*

Krishna and Balaram

So Krishna and Balaram were disciples of Sandipani Muni. And they were serving their guru. They are teaching us. One day there was no fuel in the ashram. How could the food be cooked? Gurumata said, “Oh boys, there is no fuel in the ashram. The food cannot be cooked. Go to the forest and fetch some dry wood for fuel.” So Krishna and Balaram went to the forest with an axe to get some dry wood. Why did they go there? By their mere willing, thousands and thousands of truckloads of firewood could have appeared there. Why did they go? They thought, “Because we are students, disciples, we must carry out the order of guru.”

So they went to forest with an axe to fetch wood. Then a mysterious, wonderful *līlā* took place. There was a heavy storm, cyclone, torrential rain. The whole earth was inundated with water. It was a very dark night. Continuous rain, thunder, and lightening. Very horrible. The two boys, Krishna and Balaram, couldn’t return to the ashram. Sandipani Muni could not sleep the whole night. “Oh, what has happened? These two boys went out and they have not returned. What has happened to them?” He could not sleep. As soon it was dawn and the rain ceased, immediately Sandipani Muni went to the forest and found Krishna and Balaram trembling and standing beneath a tree, like ordinary boys. This is *nara-līlā*, the Lord’s human-like pastimes. Sandipani Muni was so pleased. He embraced them and said (*Bhāg.* 10.80.40-41):

*aho he putrakā yūyam asmad-arthe ‘ti-duḥkhitāḥ
ātmā vai prāṇinām preṣṭhas tam anādr̥tya mat-parāḥ*

“O my dear boys, the body is very dear to everyone, yet you have sustained so much bodily pain for me. You are real disciples, *sat-śiṣya*.”

*etad eva hi sac-chiṣyair̥ kartavyam guru-niṣkṛtam
yad vai viśuddha-bhāvena sarvārthātāmraṇam gurau*

“A *sat-śiṣya* serves guru at any cost, even at the cost of their life. You are *sat-śiṣya* because for my sake, for my service, you have sustained so much bodily pain.”

[Concluded in the next issue.] ❧

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam lecture, Bhubaneswar, 21 April 1992.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 106 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

2 July 2005

Śrī Yoginī Ekādaśī, 10 Vāman, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,582

Highlights

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

RADHARANI'S DECORATION

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Srimati Radharani is the center of all Vrindavan's activities. In Vrindavan, Krishna is the instrument of Srimati Radharani; therefore all the inhabitants of Vrindavan still chant, "jaya rādhe!" From Krishna's own statement given herein, it appears that Radharani is the Queen of Vrindavan and that Krishna is simply Her decoration. Krishna is known as Madana-mohana, the enchanter of Cupid, but Srimati Radharani is the enchanter of Krishna. Consequently, Srimati Radharani is called Madana-mohanamohini, the enchanter of the enchanter of Cupid. ❀

— Purport to Cc. madhya 13.150

THE MERCY OF GURU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja
Part two

It is said in Āditya Purāṇa:

*harau ruṣṭe gurus trātā gurau ruṣṭe na kaścana
tasmāt sarva-prayatnena gurum eva prasādayet*

If Lord Hari is displeased, gurudeva can deliver you, *gurus trātā*. But *gurau ruṣṭe na kaścana*; *yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi* — if gurudeva is displeased, then Lord Hari cannot deliver you. *tasmāt sarva-prayatnena gurum eva prasādayet* — Therefore one who

is intelligent should serve guru at any cost and please him. Then he will get all pleasure, mercy of the Supreme Lord.

One who Rejects Guru

Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa says:

*upadeṣṭāram āmnāyā-gataṁ pariharanti ye
tān mṛtān api kravyādāḥ kṛta-ghnān nopabhuñjate
bodhaḥ kaluṣitas tena daurātmyaṁ prakāṣi-kṛtam
gurur yena parityaktas tena tyaktah purā hariḥ*

What happens to one who has accepted a bona fide guru who comes in a bona fide disciplic succession, *āmnāya-paramparā*, but later rejects him? He is an ungrateful wretch, *kṛta-ghna*. When he dies, even the vultures won't eat his flesh. Conversely, what happens when the guru rejects a disciple is described. Even before the guru has thought, "I will reject this disciple because he is not obedient to me," Lord Hari has already rejected that person. It is said, *tyaktah purā hariḥ* — at that time all the knowledge that he has received from guru becomes polluted.

Devotee: Can the disciple rectify the situation?

Gour Govinda Swami: If he is intelligent.

Devotee: Because there was one case when Srila Bhaktisiddhanta rejected one of his disciples. Later, that disciple came back to him and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta said, "I don't accept you. You go to my disciples. If they accept you, then you can do some service." He went to some of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's *sannyāsa* disciples and he was accepted.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Because if you serve the guru's dear disciples and they

become pleased, then they will request guru, “He is now repentant. He is crying. He has rectified himself.” Then guru will accept him again. If guru accepts him, then he is accepted by Krishna. Otherwise not. This is the process.

Then *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* says,

*pratipadya guruṁ yas tu mohād vipratipadyate
sa kalpa-kotīm narake pacyate puruṣādhamah*

One who has once said, “You are my guru. I have accepted your divine grace as guru.” If that person out of delusion later rejects him, he becomes *narādhamā* — lowest of men. For millions and millions of years he will suffer in *naraka*, hell.

Not an Ordinary Human

Ananta-saṁhitā says:

*adhikṣipyā guruṁ mohāt puruṣaṁ pravādanti ye
śukara-tvaṁ bhavaty eva teṣāṁ janma-śateṣv api*

Those who have accepted guru but out of ignorance foolishly chastise him, call him ill names, and consider him an ordinary human being, commit such an offense that for hundreds of lives they will have to be born as hogs and eat stool.

The *Urdhvamnāya Tantra* describes that as long as gurudeva is not pleased, one should serve him with all one’s means, at all cost, to please him. When guru is pleased, then the Supreme Lord is pleased, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, the devas, munis, and yogis, all are pleased and immediately his sinful reactions are all destroyed.

Ācāryaṁ māṁ vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit — Krishna says to Uddhava, “Don’t think of the *ācārya* as an ordinary human being.” [Bhāg. 11.17.27] If someone considers the *ācārya-guru* an ordinary human being, if they consider mantras to be mere alphabets or words found in the dictionary, if they think that the deity, *vigraha*, is made out of stone and metal, then *pāṣaṇḍī nārakī saḥ*, they must go to hell. If someone thinks like that then he commits an inexcusable offence. He must go to hell and all of his mantras, all his knowledge and all of the results of his worship of the Lord, everything, is polluted. He cannot achieve any perfection. This is *guru-tattva*.

Who cannot become a disciple? *Ananta-saṁhitā* says:

*akṛtyebhyo ‘nivāryās ca guru-śikṣāsahiṣṇavaḥ
evam-bhūtāḥ parityājyāḥ śiṣyatve nopakalpitaḥ*

One who is incorrigible, who cannot be corrected, and who cannot tolerate the discipline

inflicted on him by guru, should be rejected. He cannot be a disciple. Disciple means under discipline.

Mercy and Cheating

Devotee: If the guru does not chastise the disciple, does that mean that he is ignoring him?

Gour Govinda Swami: He is cheating him.

Devotee: Cheating?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes *vañcana*. The punishment, chastisement inflicted by guru is his mercy.

Devotee: If there is no chastisement and the guru ignores the disciple?

Gour Govinda Swami: Guru knows he is not worthy of getting mercy. Rather, he deserves being cheated. *Sādhu* has two things, *kṛpā* and *vañcana*, mercy and cheating.

Viṣṇu-smṛti describes the duty of a *śiṣya*:

*na guror apriyaṁ kuryāt tāḍitaḥ pīḍito ‘pi vā
nāvamānyeta tad-vākyaṁ nāpriyaṁ hi samācaret
ācāryasya priyaṁ kuryāt prāṇair api dhanair api
karmanā manasā vācā sa yāti paramāṁ gatim*

Disciple means under discipline. If guru shows his mercy on his disciple by inflicting very severe discipline on him, and if the disciple accepts it with pleasure, without grumbling, and serves guru, he gets mercy. One should not do anything that would bring displeasure to guru. That is *sat-śiṣya*. In spite of all sorts of punishments, discipline, and chastisement inflicted on him, he accepts and tolerates it with pleasure. He doesn’t act in any way that will create displeasure to guru. Such a person is a *sat-śiṣya* and gets the mercy of guru. *Kāya-mana-vākya* — a person who serves guru and pleases him with his mind, body and speech, with his wealth, with his merit, and with his intelligence, achieves the supreme perfection.

Guru-kṛpā is so powerful. Therefore we sing, *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyā prasādān na gatiḥ kuto ‘pi* — if guru is pleased, then Krishna is pleased. If guru is displeased, everything is finished. Whatever you have gotten is all finished, lost. *guru kṛpā hi kevalam* — By the mercy of guru, spiritual strength will be inculcated in you. Therefore we sing:

*mūkaṁ karoti vācāṁ paṇḍuṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

One who gets the mercy of guru, who pleases guru, gets all spiritual strength. If he

is dumb and cannot utter a word, he becomes an eloquent speaker on Vedic truth. If he is a cripple, he can do mountaineering. This is *guru-kṛpā*. He has such mercy.

Chastisement

Devotee: You were speaking about guru's chastisement.

Gour Govinda Swami: Chastisement is when the guru becomes angry. The example is there of Adwaita Acharya. He knows that Gauranga Mahaprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, Adwaita Acharya is a disciple of Madhavendra Puri. Therefore, he is the godbrother of Iswar Puri. That means that Mahaprabhu is like his disciple. The godbrother of one's guru means guru. So Mahaprabhu pays respect to him because he is a godbrother of his guru, Ishwara Puri. Mahaprabhu never chastised him. That is etiquette. Adwaita Acharya thought, "Oh! I am not getting any chastisement from Mahaprabhu, so how can I get His mercy? He is just patting me on the back, so I cannot get his mercy. How can I get it? If Mahaprabhu would be angry with me and chastise me, then I'll get his mercy." So, he deliberately read *Yoga-vāśiṣṭha*, *māyāvāda śāstra*, loudly so that Mahaprabhu could hear. Mahaprabhu said, "Hey! Who is that rascal?" Then Adwaita danced. "Oh, now I have got the mercy of Mahaprabhu."

Shivananda Sen

So many examples are there. When Mahaprabhu was in Puri, every year the devotees from Gaudadesh would come during *Rathayātrā* time and stay here for four months. Shivananda Sen was leading the party. He was making arrangements for the party, places for them to stay on the road, arranging *prasāda*, everything. Once Nityananda Prabhu was coming in that party. In some place the party arrived and Shivananda Sen said, "A place has been arranged. You go there. I'm coming later." Some ferry payment is there. I will finish that, then I am going. You go, everything is arranged there for you to stay and take rest." So the party reached that place.

When Nityananda Prabhu arrived, he found that it was not a good arrangement. He got angry and said, "Where is that Shivananda Sen?"

What kind of arrangement has he made?" Shivananda's wife and small children were present in the party. Nityananda Prabhu said, "He has not made a nice arrangement. There is no nice place to sit or to take rest. What is this? Where is he? Let his son die!"

When Shivananda Sen's wife heard this she thought, "Oh! Avadhut Nityananda Prabhu said that my son will die." She started crying.

Meanwhile, Shivananda Sen came and saw that his wife was crying. "Hey! Why are you crying?"

She said, "Avadhut said that one of my sons will die."

Shivananda Sen became angry, "You silly, foolish woman! That is mercy. Why are you crying? Nonsense."

Then Shivananda Sen went to see Nityananda Prabhu. Nityananda Prabhu then kicked him. "You rascal!"

Shivananda then started dancing. "Oh, such mercy I received today."

Nalakuvara and Manigriva

This is mercy. The chastisement, punishment inflicted by *vaiṣṇava-sādhū-guru* is *kṛpā*, mercy. Another example is there: Narada Muni cursed the twin brothers Nalakuvara and Manigriva. "You are such rascals. What are you doing here in the heavenly planets, shamelessly engaging in sexual activities with these heavenly girls?" He cursed them. "You go! You don't deserve to stay here. Fall down in the material world and become trees. So they became the two Arjuna trees. For 36,000 years, they remained as trees in Nanda Maharaja's courtyard. But that curse was a blessing. In 36,000 lives, they would not have been able to get Krishna. But in one life, they obtained him."

Devotee: Adwaita Acharya's behavior is not a good example for us to follow.

Gour Govinda Swami: No, no, no. It's not a good example. You should not deliberately do such things.

However, he got chastisement. To get the chastisement of *sādhū-guru-vaiṣṇava* is mercy. Therefore, one should accept it. You should not be angry with guru, "Oh! He chastised me like this!" Then all is finished. One should accept it with pleasure, "I am very fortunate that today I got mercy."

Devotee: So a neophyte should not foolishly think, “I will do deliberately some nonsense so that the guru will give me mercy.”

Gour Govinda Swami: No. One should not do that deliberately. What Adwaita Acharya did is not an example for us. Adwaita Acharya did it because he could not get mercy being the godbrother of Mahaprabhu’s guru, Ishwara Puri.

Devotee: When a *sādhū-guru* chastises his disciple, sometimes it is misunderstood by others.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, they become offenders. They cannot accept such dealings as the mercy of the guru on his disciple. They cannot understand, and thereby they commit offense. *vaiṣṇavera kriyā mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya* — It is said that what a *vaiṣṇava* does even a *vijñā*, a learned person, cannot understand because it is not a material activity. It is done on the spiritual platform. How can a material pandit understand it? He cannot.

Pundarik Vidyanidhi

Devotee: You mentioned a story from *Chaitanya-caritāmṛta* about a devotee who was living very lavishly.

Gour Govinda Swami: That is Pundarik Vidyanidhi. He was showing his *vañcana*; he was outwardly cheating. But he was a great *mahā-*

bhāgavata. Mukunda Datta told Gadhadhar Pandit, “Let us go to see Pundarik Vidyanidhi. He is *mahā-bhāgavata*, a great devotee. Let us go and have his association. So, Gadhadhar Pandit went there. Externally, if someone saw Pundarika Vidyanidhi he would consider him a *bhogī*, a materialistic enjoyer. He was wearing a very gorgeous dress and he had golden rings on all of his fingers. He was chewing *pan* and spitting in a pot that was made out of gold. He was sitting on a very valuable soft cushion.

When Gadhadhar Pandit saw him, he didn’t say anything, but he thought, “Oh, what has Mukunda Datta told me! He is *mahā-bhāgavata*, an exalted *vaiṣṇava*? He is a great *bhogī*.” Mukunda Datta could understand that this thought had come to Gadhadhar Pandit. So immediately he uttered the verse (*Bhāg.* 3.2.23):

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvō
lebhe gatim dhātry-ucitām tato ‘nyam
kaṁ vā dayālum śaraṇam vrajema*

Putana, the sister of Bakasura, smeared very dreadful poison on her breast. She then went to kill baby Krishna by allowing Him to suck her breast. But Krishna is so merciful that he gave her the place of His mother, Yasoda-mata. Putana allowed Krishna to suck her breast, so she did the work of a mother. By Krishna sucking her breast, Krishna sucked out her life breath and she was killed. Still, Krishna gave her a position equal to the position of His mother Yasoda. Krishna is so merciful. Therefore, how can we take shelter of anyone other than Krishna?

As soon as he recited that verse, Pundarik Vidyanidhi became ecstatic. The *bhāva* in him welled up. He began shedding tears. He rolled on the ground in ecstasy and kicked out all of his cushions, his spitting pot, everything. Then Gadhadhar Pandit saw, “Oh he really is a *mahā-bhāgavata*. But I have committed an offense thinking him to be a *bhogī*. Unless I am punished by him, how can I be free from this offense? I must accept him as guru and become his disciple. Then he will inflict discipline, punishment on me and that offense will be destroyed.” So he took mantra from him and became his disciple. ॐ

— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* lecture, Bhubaneswar, 21 April 1992.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 107 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

18 July 2005

Śrī Śayana Ekādaśī, 26 Vāmana, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,590

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OUR MISSION

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Wherever we go, we install this Krishna deity, we work for Krishna, we print books for Krishna, we distribute books for Krishna, we beg everyone to become Krishna's *bhakta*. Therefore it is Krishna consciousness. We have no other business than Krishna. As Krishna says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* [Bg. 18.66]. We are doing that. We have no other business.

—Pandal lecture. Delhi. 10 November 1973.

It is our duty to make all unfortunate creatures fortunate. That is our mission. Therefore, we go into the street and chant. Although they say "can't", we go on chanting. That is our duty. And if somehow or other we place some literature in someone's hand, he becomes fortunate. He would have squandered his hard-earned money in so many nasty, sinful ways, but if he purchases even one book, regardless of the price, his money is properly utilized. This is the beginning of his Krishna consciousness. —*Teachings of Queen Kunti*, chapter 13.

Our mission is to teach this science. It is not a business — "Give me some money, and I will teach you." The knowledge is free.

We are simply encouraging everyone, "Chant the Hare Krishna mantra. What is the difficulty? Simply chant Hare Krishna and dance." —*Dharma: The Way of Transcendence*, chapter 2.

Before me so many swamis came in this country. They could not present the real thing. They wanted some money and went away. That is all. This Krishna consciousness movement is not like that. We want to give something to the Western countries. That is our purpose. We have not come to beg. We have to give something. That is my mission. They come here to beg, "Give me rice, give me dal, give me wheat, give me money," but I have come here to give something of Indian culture. That is the difference.

—*Śrīmad Bhāg.* lecture. New York. 6 July 1972.

Practice *bhakti-yoga*, be Krishna conscious, and make your life successful. That is our mission. It is not a business, that, "Give me some money then I will teach you." It is open. We are asking everyone, "Chant the Hare Krishna mantra. What is the difficulty? There is no loss. You haven't got to pay anything." —*Śrīmad Bhāg.* lecture. Hyderabad. 21 April 1974.

Our mission should be that first we must assimilate all of the knowledge given by all the great saintly persons — Krishna and others — and distribute this knowledge all over the world. The whole world is also expecting that, therefore as soon as the rascal swami

goes there, they immediately gather: “Here is one swami from India. We may get something.” But they are cheating. They are cheating, taking money, having illicit sex, enjoying, and coming back. Therefore, they could not do anything. But the whole world is waiting for India’s culture, India’s *bhakti*, and India’s spiritual knowledge.

—*Nectar of Devotion* lecture. Bombay. 7 January 1973.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s mission is to make everyone’s life successful. Everyone become happy. That is everyone’s mission. “Everyone” means those who are devotees. How will people become happy? That is their mission. It is not that we start a mission just to make some money and to fill up our hungry belly. No. It is a mission to see that everyone is happy in Krishna consciousness. This is the mission.

—Lecture. Bombay. 19 March 1972.

Let our society be very pure. *ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārā* — One moon is sufficient. There is no need of millions of stars. One moon gives light. If we can make one person fully Krishna conscious, then our mission is successful. What is the use of millions of twinkling stars?

—Room Conversation. Bombay. 7 January 1977.

KALI’S INFLUENCE

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

In the following article, *Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode* speaks about the influence of Kali, the presiding deity of the present age of quarrel.

Who are Kali’s agents?

The agents of Kali are those who accept the disciplic succession of Sri Krishna Chaitanya but secretly do not follow the rules and regulations laid down by the disciplic succession.

— From *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā*, chapter 2.

What is the duty of a tolerant person?

If anyone blasphemes you, you should tolerate it. Do not insult anyone. Taking shelter of the material body, you should not envy anyone else. There is no doubt that lust is a place where Kali can reside. Becoming lusty to serve Krishna is transcendental and is known as love of God. To desire sense gratification is

mundane and is Kali’s residence. One must give up all such mundane desires.

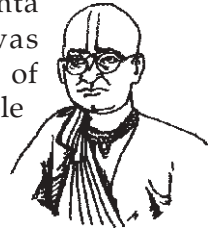
— From *Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 15.2

— From *Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhava* chapters 7 and 91. Compiled by and with questions from Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated by Sri Bhumiapati Das, Published by Sri Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

KRISHNA IS NOT AN OBJECT OF OUR MUNDANE VISION

*From the life of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

Once, *Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada* was standing on the front porch of the *Sri Chaitanya Math* temple taking darshan of the deities of *Sri Sri Guru-Gauranga-Gandharvika-Giridhari*. The door to the altar is not very wide and *Srila Prabhupada* did not have his glasses on. Standing next to him was one of his dear disciples. The disciple thought perhaps *Prabhupada* could not view the deities very well through the narrow doorway. He said, “*Prabhupada*, this doorway is not very wide. It will be difficult for you to see the deities from here.”



When he heard this, *Prabhupada* smiled and gave the following teaching for the benefit of us all: “We should not think of the Supreme Lord as an object of our mundane vision. We should rather consider how we might become worthy objects of his vision. Then he will both want to see us and reveal himself to us.”

*atah śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

“The holy name, form, qualities and pastimes of Sri Krishna are divine and transcendental. They cannot be experienced by material senses. The Lord manifests Himself spontaneously on the tongue of a devotee who is eager to serve Him.”
(BRS 1.2.109)

— Remembrance by Sri Srimad Bhakti Pramod Puri Maharaja. *Of Love in Separation*. Mandala Publishing Group. San Rafael, California. 2001. Page 21.

THE STORY OF GULIKA

Nārada Purāṇa 1.37.19-69

Formerly, in the *Satyā-yuga*, there was a hunter named *Gulika*. He was always attempting to

abduct other men's wives and take away other men's wealth. He constantly criticized others and regularly tortured other creatures. He killed *brāhmaṇas* and cows by the hundreds and thousands. So many great sins were committed by him that it is impossible to enumerate them even in the course of millions of years.

Once, this great sinner, who could be compared to the god of death in regard to his dealings with creatures, went to the capital city of the King of Sauvira. The kingdom was filled with all kinds of riches. It was opulently decorated with well-adorned women and lakes of translucent water as well as trading centers. It was comparable to the city of the gods. There was a beautiful temple of Vishnu situated in the middle of a park therein, covered with golden domes resembling pots. Seeing this, the hunter was very pleased. Ardently longing for wealth to steal, he decided, "I shall take away much gold from here," and he went into the temple. There he saw the excellent *brāhmāna* Uttanka, adept in the *sāstra*, a storehouse of austerities, and engaged in rendering service to Lord Vishnu.

That *brāhmaṇa*, who was devoid of material desires, was sitting alone in the temple contemplating the Lord. Seeing him, the hunter regarded him as an obstacle in his act of stealing. Desirous of taking away the collected treasures of the Lord, Gulika took out his sword and decided to kill Uttanka. The hunter pressed his foot down on Uttanka's chest and caught hold of his hair with his hand.

Seeing the hunter about to kill him, Uttanka said, "O my good man, why do you want to kill me, who am utterly sinless? How have I offended you? My gentle friend, in this world, powerful persons chastise offenders and teach them a lesson. But good men do not kill even sinners in vain.

*virodhiṣv api murkheṣu nirikṣyāvasthitān guṇān
virodham nahi kurvanti sajjanāḥ śānta vetasah*

"Good men of calm minds see the good qualities present even in offending fools and they do not offend them in return. (text 33)

*bahudhā badhyamāno 'pi yo naraḥ kṣamayānvitah
tam uttaman naram prāhur viṣṇoḥ priyataram sadā*

"That person who is always tolerant even when he is being harassed is the most excellent man. He is forever the favorite of Lord Vishnu. (text 34)

*sujano na yāti vairam parahitabuddhir vināśakāle 'pi chede
'pi candana-taruḥ surabhayati mukham kuṭharasya*

"Even at the time of death, a good man thinks of the welfare of others, and does not become inimical to his offender. Even when cut, a sandalwood tree renders the edge of the axe fragrant. (text 35)

"Alas! Fate is very powerful. It afflicts people in many ways. Even a man who has given up all contact with worldly affairs is being harassed by the wicked-minded. Many people in this world are oppressed for no reason. Even a saintly person who has given up everything material is harassed by backbiters and critics.

*myga-mīna-sajjanānām tṛṇa-jala-santosa-vihita-vṛttinām
lubdhakādhrāva-piṣunā niṣkāraṇa-vairiṇo jagati*

"In this universe, the hunter, the fisherman and the fault-finding critics are the causeless enemies of the deer, the fish and good people who maintain themselves with grass, water and contentment. (text 38)

"*Māyā* is very powerful. She deludes the entire universe and makes all people miserable for the sake of sons, friends and women. O hunter, by stealing other people's wealth you have maintained your wife and female dependents, but in the end you will have to leave everyone and depart this world alone.

"My mother', 'my father', 'my wife', 'my sons', 'this is mine.' These feelings of material possession harass all creatures. One enjoys the benefits of having relatives only as long as one earns wealth. However, it is only the sins and pious activities that remain with one both here and after death. Only the pious acts and sins of a person follow him to the next world, not his wealth, sons, or relatives. The lust of men indulging in sinful activities increases day by day. Yet the lust of men who perform pious deeds becomes reduced and extinguished. All people in this world are always unnecessarily agitated over the problem of earning wealth.

*yad bhāvi tad bhavaty eva tad bhāvyaṁ na tad bhavet
iti niścita-buddhīnām na cintā bādhat kvacit*

"What is destined to happen will definitely come about. What is not destined to occur shall never

take place. If people accept this conclusion, then no anxiety can trouble them. (text 47)

“This entire universe consisting of all mobile and immobile beings is under the control of fate. Wherever one may stay, whatever is destined to happen certainly happens. Being ignorant and unaware of it, the whole world exerts itself in vain. Alas! The misery of men who are worried due to the feelings of material attachment! Just to feed others, they go on committing great sins. The relatives all share in enjoying the wealth one earns, but alone and bewildered, the collector of that wealth has to suffer the reactions of his sins.”

As the sage said this, Gulika became frightened. He released the sage and with hands folded in reverence repeatedly begged him for forgiveness. By the presence of Lord Hari [the deity whom all this took place in front of] and by the power of association with the saintly Uttanka, the hunter became free from his sins. Repenting for his misdeeds, he said, “O leading *brāhmaṇa*! Many great sins have been committed by me. All of them have perished at your very sight. Alas! I have been sinfully inclined. I have continuously committed great sins. O holy lord, how is my deliverance possible? To whom shall I approach for refuge? I have been born as a hunter due to the sins

accumulated in my previous births. By the sins I have also committed in this birth, I do not know what state I shall attain? Alas! My span of life is reducing quickly. Many sins have been accumulated by me and I have not atoned for them. What will be my state after death? What will be my next birth? Alas! Why did the creator make me one defiled by hundreds of sins? I am perpetually becoming increasingly sinful. How shall I reap the adverse effects of those sins? For how many births am I to go on committing terrible deeds?” Thus condemning himself, the hunter became scorched by the fire of his mental agony and died instantaneously.

Seeing the fallen hunter, the kind-hearted sage Uttanka sprinkled him with water that had washed the feet of Lord Vishnu. Due to the contact with that sacred water, the hunter became free from his sins. Seated in a divine aerial car he then appeared before the sage. Gulika said, “O holy sage Uttanka! You are my guru. By your mercy, I have been freed from the bondage of great sins. Thanks to your instructions, my distress has gone. Similarly, all my sins have been destroyed. O sage, since the water from the feet of Vishnu has been sprinkled on me by you I have been enabled to attain the topmost abode of Lord Vishnu. O *brāhmaṇa*, I have been freed from this sinful body by you. Hence, O learned one, I bow down to you. Please forgive the offense committed by me to you.”

After saying this, he showered the sage with divine flowers. He circumambulated him three times, offered obeisances to him, and then climbed into the aerial chariot equipped with all desirable things and occupied by groups of celestial damsels. He then went to the abode of Lord Hari.

Seeing this, Uttanka, the storehouse of austerities, became surprised. Keeping his palms joined over his head in reverence, he offered prayers to the lord of Lakshmi. Mahavishnu granted him an excellent boon, thanks to which Uttanka attained the highest abode (*param-padam*). ❀

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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31 July 2005

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• QUALITIES OF THE AGE OF KALI

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• DON'T HESITATE FOR SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

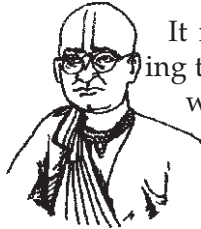
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THIS DAMNED MIND

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*



It is painful to see people wasting their valuable time in no better work than mischievous, ill-conceived criticisms of others' conduct. They excel only in giving advice to others. Their damned mind is, no doubt, responsible for this. So, every morning, on rising from bed, they should make their wicked mind hear the following immortal song of Thakur Bhaktivinoda:

*bhaja re bhaja re āmāra mana ati manda
(bhaja) vraja-vane rādhā-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāravinda
(bhaja) gaura-gadādhara advaita guru-nityānanda
(smara) śrīnīvāsa haridāsa murāri mukunda
(smara) rūpa-sanātana-jīva-raghunātha-dvāndva
(smara) rāghava-gopāla-bhaṭṭa-svarūpa-rāmānanda
(smara) goṣṭhi-saha karṇapūra sena śivānanda
(smara) rūpānuga sādhu-jana bhājana-ānanda*

In this song, the mind is asked, first of all, to hold *bhajan* of Radha-Krishna (in their joyful activity) in the sacred woodland of Vraja. In comparative view, the degrees of excellence of the five *rasas*, from *mādhurya* (consortship) to *śānta* (the state in which active service is wanting), are gradually lowering. A servitor in the last mentioned posi-

tion (i.e., *śānta-rasa*) is neither actively engaged in *bhajan* nor against it. He will neither oppose *bhajan* nor actively hold it. Now, *bhajan* or *bhakti* may be of different kinds. There is such a thing as *michā-bhakti*, false *bhakti*, as opposed to *śuddha-bhakti*, unalloyed *bhakti*. The adherents of karma, who are followers of *smṛti*, take recourse to the former. In *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* 6.18, Thakur Narottama Das warns us against such false *bhakti* by saying:

*karmi, jñāni, michā-bhakta, nā habe tate anurakta,
śuddha-bhajanete kara mana*

Don't absorb your thoughts in the fruitive worker, the philosopher, or the hypocritical devotee. Fix your mind in pure *bhājana*.

The cult of the so-called social reformers (or society makers) of the past or present age is quite different from the ideas and principles of *bhaktas*. The followers of the former are engaged, at present, in various movements relating to personal advantages and self-enjoyment.

Those agitators who, leaving aside all considerations of *bhakti*, are busily engaged in movements for temporal advantages only are doing harm to themselves. And their failure to serve Krishna, who is the emporium, or rather effigy, of all endless, immeasurable nectar of love, joys and pleasures, bespeaks simply of their ignorance of the real state of

affairs. Such desistance of service to Krishna gradually turns a man into an upholder of *nirviśeṣa-vāda*, the doctrine of the unspecifiedness of the absolute truth. What can be more deplorable than such misfortune of mankind? To counteract the aforesaid tendencies in us, we should sing, every morning, advising our wicked mind to hold *bhajan*, which is impossible if we are unmindful of the dictum:

*trṇād api su-nīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā māna-dena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

Which means that *hari-kīrtana* should be continued ceaselessly and with the humility of low grass.

What is the object of our *bhajan*? It is only the holy feet of Radha-Krishna, roaming about freely in the woodland of Vraja. And what should be our line of conduct in holding *bhajan*? Mahaprabhu's advice to Srila Das Goswami [Cc. *antya* 6.236-237], in this connection, is as follows:

*grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe*

*amānī mānada hañā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe*

Have no worldly talk, nor pay heed to it,
Wear no good clothes, nor rich food eat,
Have *kṛṣṇa-nāma* always, humbly, on your tongue,
Serve Radha-Krishna in the closet of the mind.

In the aforesaid verse, the first two advices are in the negative and the remaining two are in the affirmative. By "*vraja-seva*", Mahaprabhu meant service to Krishna by one who has a transcendental body and whose self-realization is complete. People ignorant of this generally turn into mental speculators, and cannot rightly understand the teachings of the Gaudiya Math. ❀

— From an evening lecture at the Calcutta Gaudiya Math.
12 July 1936.

QUALITIES OF THE AGE OF KALI

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



In the age of Kali, the women and the children, along with *brāhmaṇas* and cows, will be grossly neglected and left unprotected. In this age, illicit connection with women will

render many women and children uncared for. Circumstantially, the women will try to become independent of the protection of men, and marriage will be performed as a matter of formal agreement between man and woman. In most cases, the children will not be taken care of properly. The *brāhmaṇas* are traditionally intelligent men, and thus they will be able to pick up modern education to the topmost rank, but as far as moral and religious principles are concerned, they shall be the most fallen. Education and bad character go ill together, but such things will run parallel. The administrative heads as a class will condemn the tenets of Vedic wisdom and will prefer to conduct a so-called secular state, and the so-called educated *brāhmaṇas* will be purchased by such unscrupulous administrators. Even a philosopher and writer of many books on religious principles may accept an exalted post in a government that denies all the moral codes of the *śāstras*. The *brāhmaṇas* are specifically restricted from accepting such service. But in this age, they will not only accept service, but they will do so even if it is of the meanest quality. These are some of the symptoms of the Kali age, which are harmful to the general welfare of human society. ❀

— Purport to *Bhāg.* 1.16.21.

DON'T HESITATE FOR SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Śugasyaṁ śīghram — anything auspicious, especially for the service of the Lord, should be immediately executed without delay. However, for anything material you should consider carefully three hundred times before you take it up. Do not be very eager to take up anything material. But anything spiritual, immediately, without consideration, start it. *jīvana aniścitā* — This body is uncertain. At any moment it may go away. Anything spiritual that is done is your permanent, inexhaustible bank balance. A wise, intelligent man immediately accepts it. Working in such a way will free you from all your anxiety. The lotus feet of the Lord is such a place that if you take complete shelter there, if you completely surrender to him,

then there will be no anxiety, no fear, no lamentation, and no death. Mahajan Bhaktivinode Thakur has said (Śaraṇāgati 2.8.2):

*aśoka-abhaya, amṛta-ādhāra,
tomāra caraṇa-dvaya
tāhāte ekhana, viśrāma labhiyā
chāḍḍinu bhavera bhaya*

“O Lord, Your lotus feet are such a place that if someone takes complete shelter of them, there will be no fear, lamentation, anxiety, or death, *amṛta*.”

— From a deity installation lecture in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. 21 January 1991.

THE PROCESS OF INITIATION

Śrī Sanat-kumāra Samhitā Texts 86-108

*atha dīkṣā-vidhiṁ vakṣye śṛṇu nārada tattvataḥ
śravaṇād eva mucyante vinā yasya vidhānataḥ*

O Narada, please hear and I will tell you about spiritual initiation. Simply by hearing of this, even without following this description, people can become liberated.

*ā-virīṇcāḥ jagat sarvaṁ vijñāya naśvaram budhaḥ
ādhyātmikādi tri-vidhaṁ duḥkham evānubhūya ca
anitya-tvāc ca sarveṣāṁ sukhānāṁ muni-sattama
duḥkha-pakṣe viniṣṭipya tāni tebhya virajyate*

O best of sages, becoming aware that every place in the material world, from Brahmaloḥka down, is temporary and destined for destruction, directly feeling the three kinds of material suffering, beginning with sufferings caused by one’s own body and mind, and also seeing that all kinds of material happiness come to an end and finally lead only to pain, a wise person renounces the world. No longer is he interested in the things of this world.

*virajya saṁsṛter hānau sādhanāni vicintayet
anuttama-sukhasyāpi samprāptau bhṛṣaṁ duḥkhitāḥ*

When a person no longer desires to enjoy material things, he should consider how to finally sever all connection with this world. Only when he succeeds in that will such a person, unhappy with the world, attain peerless happiness.

*śaraṇaṁ duṣkaratvaṁ hi vijñāya ca mahā-matīḥ
bhṛṣaṁ artas tato vipra śrī-gurum śaraṇaṁ vrajet*

O brāhmaṇa, aware that the shelter of the Lord is very difficult to attain, and also distressed by material life, a wise person should take shelter of a bona-fide spiritual master.

*śānto vimatsaraḥ kṛṣṇa-bhakto ‘nanya-prayojanaḥ
ananya-sādhanaḥ śrīmān krodha-lobha-vivarjitaḥ*

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-rasa-tattva-jñāḥ kṛṣṇa-mantra-vidāṁ varaḥ
kṛṣṇāśrayo nityaṁ mantra-bhaktaḥ sadā-śuciḥ*

*sad-dharma-sādhako nityaṁ sad-ācāra-niyojakaḥ
sampradāyī kṛpā-pūrṇo virāgī gurur ucyate*

It is said that a bona-fide spiritual master should be peaceful, non-envious, devoted to Lord Krishna, not interested in things that have no relation to Lord Krishna, not engaged in activities that have no relation to Lord Krishna, filled with spiritual virtues, free of anger and greed, learned in the science of the nectar mellows of Lord Krishna, expert in the mantras glorifying Lord Krishna, always surrendered to Lord Krishna, always taking shelter of Lord Krishna, devoted to chanting the mantras glorifying Lord Krishna, always pure, always pious and religious, always engaged in devotional service to the Lord, a teacher who shows his disciples how to serve the Lord, himself a disciple in the *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), filled with mercy, and renounced.

*evam-ādi-guṇaḥ prāyaḥ śuśrūṣur guru-pādayoḥ
gurau nitanta-bhaktaś ca mumukṣuḥ śiṣya ucyate*

It is said that a bona-fide disciple should also have qualities like these. He should have faith in his spiritual master’s feet, be completely devoted to his spiritual master, and have the attainment of liberation as the goal of his life.

*yat sāksāt sevanaṁ tasya premṇā bhagavato bhavet
sa mokṣaḥ procyate prājñair veda-vedāṅga-vedibhiḥ*

Service to the spiritual master is the same as direct loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The wise, learned in the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*, declare that this service is the path to liberation.

*trāyasva bho jagan-nātha guro saṁsāra-vahninā
dagdham ca kāla-daṣṭaṁ ca trāhi maṁ bhava-sāgarāt*

O spiritual master of all the worlds, please rescue me, for I am burning in the fire of repeated birth and death! I am bitten by the black snake of time! Please rescue me from the ocean of birth and death!

*śrī-nanda-nandanaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sarva-deva-śiro-maṇiḥ
pādāmbujaika-bhāg eka-dīkṣā proktā maṇiṣibhiḥ*

Lord Krishna, the son of Nanda, is the crest jewel of all deities. One should worship his lotus feet alone. One time only one should accept initiation into the worship of his lotus feet. This is said by the wise.

*āgatya ca guroḥ pāde nija-vṛttaṁ nivedayet
sa-sandehānaṁ prāhvatyā bodhayitvā punaḥ punaḥ*

One should approach the spiritual master's feet, offer service to them, and learn the truth by repeatedly asking questions.

*sva-pāda-pranataṁ sāntaṁ śuśrūṣuṁ nija-pādayoḥ
ati-hṛṣṭa-manāḥ śiṣyaṁ gurur adhyāpayen manum*

Happy at heart, the spiritual master then teaches the sacred mantra to the disciple who is peaceful, who has faith in his spiritual master's feet, and who is surrendered to his spiritual master's feet.

*candanena mṛdā vāpi vilikhet bāhu-mūlayoḥ
vāma-dakṣiṇayor vipra śaṅkha-cakre yathā kramam*

O brāhmaṇa, using sandalwood paste or clay, the spiritual master should draw a conchshell and *cakra* on the left and right shoulders.

*ūrdhva-puṇḍraṁ tataḥ kuryād bhālādiṣu vidhānataḥ
tato mantra-dvayaṁ tasya dakṣa-karṇe vinirdiśet*

Then the spiritual master should draw *vaiṣṇava tilaka* on the forehead and other

places, and then speak the two mantras in the disciple's right ear.

*mantrārthaś ca vadet tasmai yathāvad anupūroṣaḥ
dāsa-śabda-yutaṁ nāma dhāyaya tasya prayatnataḥ*

Then he should explain the meaning of the mantras, and then he should give the disciple a name ending with the word “*dāsa*” (servant).

*tato 'ti-bhaktiā sa-snehaṁ vaiṣṇavān bhojayed budhaḥ
śrī-gururṁ pūjayec cāpi vastrālaṅkāraṇādibhiḥ*

Then the wise disciple should affectionately and devotedly feast the *vaiṣṇavas*, and then he should worship the spiritual master with garments, ornaments, and other gifts.

*sarvasvaṁ gurave dadyāt tad-ardhaṁ vā mahā-mune
sva-deham api nikṣiptaṁ puras tiṣṭhed akiñcanaḥ*

O great sage, then the disciple should offer all his wealth to his spiritual master, or he may offer half his wealth, or, being penniless, he may offer his body in the spiritual master's service.

*ya etaḥ pañcabhir vidvān saṁskārāḥ saṁskṛto bhavet
dāsa-bhāgī sa kṛṣṇasya nānyathā kalpa-koṭibhiḥ*

With these five *saṁskāras*, purificatory rituals, one becomes purified. He becomes a servant of Lord Krishna. Even in ten million *kalpas* he will not renounce that service.

*aṅkanam cordhva-puṇḍraṁ ca mantra-nāma-vidhāraṇam
pañcamī yāga ity uktam saṁskāraṁ pūrva-sūribhiḥ*

The previous sages say these five *saṁskāras* are the marking of the body, *tilaka*, the mantra, the name, and the *yajña*.

*aṅkanam śaṅkha-cakrādyaiḥ sac-chidra-puṇḍra ucyate
dāsa-śabda-yutaṁ nāma mantro yugala-samjñakam*

The marking is the marking of the conchshell, disc, and other signs. The *tilaka* is *vaiṣṇava tilaka*. The name is the name to which the word “*dāsa*” (servant) is added. The mantra is the two mantras already described.

*guru-vaiṣṇavayoḥ pūjā yāga ity abhidhīyate
ete parama-saṁskārā mayā te parikīrtitaḥ*

The *yajña* is the worship of the spiritual master and the *vaiṣṇavas*. I have thus described these great *saṁskāras* to you. ❧

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
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c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 109 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

16 August 2005

Śrī Pavitrārōpiṇī Ekādaśī, 26 Śrīdhara, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,601

Highlights

• CONQUERED BY HIS DEVOTEE

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• THE BIRTH OF SRI KRISHNA

Sri Sajjana Toshani Vol. XXIX, September 1931

• FESTIVAL OF THE BIRTH OF THE LORD AND HIS ASSOCIATES

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushana's Śrī Aīśvarya-kādambinī, chapter five, verses 1-19

CONQUERED BY HIS DEVOTEE

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



Although Krishna is not conquerable, he likes to be conquered by his devotee. That is his position. Just like he willingly allowed himself to be conquered by Mother Yasoda, to be conquered by Radharani, to be conquered by his friends. Krishna became defeated and he has to take his friend on his shoulder. Sometimes we see that a king keeps a joker amongst his associates. Sometimes that joker insults the king, and the king enjoys it. In Bengal there was a famous joker named Gopal Bon. One day the king asked him, "Gopal, what is the difference between you and an ass?" He immediately measured the distance from the king to himself and said, "The difference is only three feet." Everyone began to laugh. And the king enjoyed that insult. Because sometimes it is required.

Similarly, everyone praises Krishna's exalted position. Krishna is the Supreme Lord. In Vaikuntha, there is only praising. But in Vrindavan, Krishna is free to accept insults from his devotees. People do not know what is Vrindavan life; the devotees there are so exalted. Radharani orders, "Don't allow Krishna to come here!" And Krishna cannot come in. He flatters the other *gopīs*, "Please allow me to go there." "No, no. There is no order. You cannot go." So Krishna likes that. ❀

— Nectar of Devotion lecture, Calcutta. 30 January 1973.

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THE BIRTH OF SRI KRISHNA

*Sri Sajjana Toshani
Vol. XXIX, September 1931*

No author's name was given to this article. Since Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur was the editor for Sajjana Toshani in September of 1931, it was either written directly by him or it was written under his supervision.

By the testimony of the holy scriptures, Sri Krishna manifested the divine *līlā* of his most auspicious birth in this phenomenal world about five thousand years ago. The Supreme Personality of Godhead was born in the holy city Mathura.

Based on the above scriptural references (testimony), the worship of Sri Krishna has been confounded, by some, with the worship of an historical hero. This is because it has been gratuitously assumed, even by writers who call themselves believers in the divinity of Jesus Christ, that Sri Krishna has been conclusively proven human by the admitted fact of his being born of human parents.

The abnormal term "incarnation", or "incarceration in the flesh", has been invented by so-called theologians to denote the miracle of Christ's nativity. Christ has been described as having put on the mortal coil in order to experience, and by that experiencing to deliver the human race from the sufferings which the flesh is heir to. It is out of deference to the divine nature of Christ that these theologians regard this condescension on his part as a miracle. If Christ were to be admitted as having been born as a mortal, he then becomes an ordinary historical

personage, to the great relief of all persons who aspire to understand the nature of divinity by means of their own muddy intelligence. Further, if this admission is made, such writers are no longer obliged to acknowledge the absurdity of a doctrine of an historical incarnation who is not bound to the laws of human society.

It is necessary to get rid of the idea of 'historical incarnation' in the above sense to understand the nature of Sri Krishna's birth. Sri Krishna's own divine form became visible to mortal eyes under the figure of a human baby born in the usual way. But the event itself was a true manifestation of the eternal transcendental birth of the divinity. This transcendental nature was not and can never be perceived by any conditioned soul. The supreme chose to disclose itself in the figure of a human child, an event which has correspondence to the divine event. However, the nature of this correspondence itself is wholly inconceivable to the limited understanding of conditioned souls. By these criteria, the birth of Sri Krishna is prevented by the narrators of the scriptures from imbibing any of the unwholesomeness of a mortal birth or an historical event.

The son-hood of Godhead, in the eternal transcendental sense, is unreservedly admitted by the doctrine of divine descent (*avatāra*). This doctrine has been wrongly termed 'incarnation' because the process of descent does not refer to the divinity's assumption of the mortal coil for rendering 'service' to humanity by undergoing mortal suffering. The doctrine of divine descent implies, on the contrary, that Godhead can never be subject to any limitation in the mundane sense. Or, in other words, there is eternal and irreconcilable distinction between the mundane and the purely spiritual, of which the latter is the proper nature of the substantive reality — the realm of activities of the divinity. The mundane realm eternally dogs the absolute as its shadow, or rather its reflected image (a distorted and unwholesome one at that). The divine realm is full of spiritual activity, dimly and inconceivably reflected in the events of this world as viewed through the limited mind of the conditioned soul.

Sri Madhavendra Puri, in the line of disciplic succession from Sri Madhva and one generation earlier than Sri Chaitanya, is regarded as the first religious preacher to realize the nature of loving service to Sri Krishna as described in the tenth *skandha* of the *Bhāgavatam*. Subsequently, this was fully promulgated by the teachings and

practice of Sri Krishna Chaitanya as the highest, most perfect form of worship. The method of divine worship practiced by the milkmaids of Vraja is declared by Sri Chaitanya to be higher than all other forms. The worship of Sri Radhika, the premier milkmaid of Vraja, is proclaimed by the same authority as the highest of all, incorporating and surpassing the rest. Sri Krishna dwelt in Vraja until his eleventh year. Therefore, Sri Radhika's worship of adolescent Krishna by the method of amorous love is regarded by the followers of Sri Chaitanya as the complete form of service to Sri Krishna. This worship of Sri Krishna is of such supreme excellence that the Lord eternally prefers to clothe himself in the mood of his counter-whole Sri Radhika in order to taste the sweetness of her service to him. Sri Krishna clad in the mood and beauty of Sri Radhika is Sri Krishna Chaitanya — the ultimate source of complete service.

Neither the son-hood nor the adolescent consort-hood of Sri Krishna are events of the mundane plane. Those seriously disposed to know their real transcendental nature are enabled to do so by the causeless mercy of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. By the test of scripture, he is the only teacher of the world, being alone absolutely fit to practice what he teaches. Accordingly, the scriptures declare that the sincere willingness to serve Sri Krishna to the exclusion of all else is the only method of attaining his service. This can only be attained by the grace of the spiritual guide who wields the power of Sri Krishna Chaitanya.

Unless the whole scheme for the redemption of the conditioned soul is clearly kept in mind, the service of Godhead is apt to be confused with mundane affairs performed for the attainment of limited illusory results. From the mundane point of view there can be no meaning in the worship of Godhead. If there is to be any acceptable service of Godhead it should be absolutely free from all mundane unwholesomeness; rather, it should completely fulfill, in a never-ending order of progression, all aspirations of all aptitudes of the conditioned soul.

The most valued possession of the conditioned soul is his individual nature, his personality. He wants to be assured of the substantive continuance of his present personality by the method of fulfillment of his particular outlook and function in accordance with his individual outlook. In other words, by analysis, the true nature of the soul is essentially cognitive. This cognitive nature

wants to be assured of its complete fulfillment. It wants this consummation because of not being content with its present position. The scriptures say this nature is capable of being satisfied only with the sincere and impartial realization that anything offered by its present, limited outlook can never give what it really wants. Therefore, if the conditioned soul wants real satisfaction, a radical change of outlook and environment is imperative. With its present equipment, such a soul has no access (presently or in the future) to that plane. If the feasibility of attaining a state of complete fulfillment is admitted, it follows that such present equipment cannot be regarded as part and parcel of the self. After all, for the conditioned soul to regard its present equipment as not inherent but, rather, as an obstacle in the way of realizing what the real self requires, does not amount to self-destruction.

The problem for the conditioned soul is to carry its personality, unimpaired and fully expanded, to a sphere where it can properly exercise all its faculties in a perfectly satisfying way. The discoveries of the physical sciences succeed, somewhat, in persuading that the solution of this problem can be found on the mundane plane. But the physical sciences, in the pride of their earthly triumphs, have learnt to look askance at the very problem the soul has always been putting to itself. (At any rate, they have no mind to waste their time over what they suppose is no better than a form of hallucinative idleness of minds without sufficient mundane occupation.) Critics trained in this materialistic school of modern thought feel themselves square pegs in round holes when they find it necessary to investigate this problem of religion. Those among them who persist in this quest, which does not reward its participants with the discovery of any earthly good, find it necessary to seek the aid of physical science's conclusions for the purpose of finding the absolute. But one can never get blood out of stone.

Sri Krishna is the absolute — the conclusions of the physical sciences do not apply to him, for they lie off his proper plane altogether. In order to have access to the plane of the absolute, it is necessary to realize one's spiritual self. The external coverings of the physical and mental coils, which the conditioned soul mistakes for the self, have no means to approach the spiritual plane. It is open to the physical scientists to refuse to believe in the existence of the absolute, despite the consistent promptings of their own rational

natures. This is what the atheist actually does. He refuses to be rational in order to disbelieve the absolute. But all the ephemeral discoveries of the physical sciences will never succeed in stifling the eternal quests of the ignored soul.

The absolute possesses a specific personality of his own that is the source of all existence, both material and transcendental. The absolute person possesses a specific name and a specific body. In these respects, there is an inconceivable but realizable resemblance between the state of man and Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna is simultaneously unborn, in the earthly sense, and eternally born on the transcendental plane. The eternal birth of Sri Krishna is perceived only by those who have attained a very advanced state of spiritual realization. Sri Krishna manifests his eternal birth in the perfectly pure spiritual essence called Vasudev, in the language of the scriptures. This essence does not belong to the tiny soul of man but may make himself known to a pure soul. By the grace of Vasudev, the tiny soul is able to realize the divine event of Sri Krishna's birth, which is otherwise inaccessible to him. ❧

FESTIVAL OF THE BIRTH OF THE LORD AND HIS ASSOCIATES

*Srila Baladev Vidyabhushana's
Śrī Aīśvarya-kādambinī
chapter five, verses 1-19*

Lotus-eyed Lord Krishna, the master of all transcendental opulence and glory, entered Maharaja Vasudev and appeared before Maharaja Nanda. Learned and exalted, Vasudev and Nanda gave Krishna to their wives, who both held Him as their son.

Because of Krishna's entrance in their wombs, the two friends Devaki and Yasoda became very beautiful. Appearing as splendid lightning, they delighted the pious devotees and pained the envious demons.

When Lord Mukunda, Krishna, appeared in this world, musical instruments sounded of their own accord, trees and flowers blossomed, and the minds and hearts of the *brāhmaṇas* and devotees also blossomed with happiness.

On the eighth night of the dark moon, at midnight, when the star Rohini was near the moon, the queen of Vraja easily gave birth to twins, Lord Hari and the goddess Durga, and at the same moment Devaki gave birth to a single child, Lord Hari. When Lord Hari appeared in this way, the pure-hearted devotees became filled with joy. ❧

Seeing his son and knowing Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudev became filled with happiness and gave away millions of cows in charity within his mind. Because he was afraid of Kamsa, Vasudev quickly carried his unlimitedly powerful son to the home of his brother, the king of Vraja. Vasudev placed his own son in Nanda's home, took Yasoda's daughter, and gave her to King Kamsa. By Lord Krishna's inconceivable potency, the two Krishnas born separately from Devaki and Yasoda became one tiny child.

From his associates, the king of Vraja learned about the birth of his son, who was in truth the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Overcome with joy, the king dressed in costly garments and ornaments and had the best of *brāhmaṇas* perform the birth ceremony according to the rules of the *śruti-śāstra*. Nanda Maharaja was naturally generous and full of faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Overwhelmed with joy at the festive celebration of his son's birth, he gave two million nicely decorated cows along with their calves in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. Nanda Maharaja gave to the *brāhmaṇas* seven hills of grain along with many jewels, golden ornaments, and costly garments. All the cows were carefully decorated for the occasion. Vraja became filled with wonder.

The *brāhmaṇas*, *sūtas* (professional reciters of the old histories), *māgadhas* (professional reciters of the histories of royal dynasties), and *vandīs*

(general singers of prayers) recited auspicious prayers. Musical instruments were sounded, and there was a great wonder of singing and dancing. Hearing about the auspicious transcendental qualities of Nanda Maharaja's son, the cowherd people became full of joy. Nicely dressed, wearing jeweled ornaments, and bearing valuable gifts in their hands, they eagerly went to the home of the king of Vraja. Dressed in wonderful colorful ornaments, beautiful jewelled earrings, ankle bells, and great necklaces, and carrying gifts in their hands, the women of the town of Vrajapura came to the king's palace, eager to see Lord Krishna. Their voices decorated with the shouts of jaya, the people of Vraja sprinkled ghee, yoghurt, and tumeric. As if mad with happiness, Brahma, Siva, Sanatkumara, and all the demigods danced in the king's courtyard. With a joyful heart, the king of Vraja welcomed his friends and relatives and gave them gifts of many priceless jeweled ornaments, costly garments, fragrant incense and perfume, fulfilling all their desires. Nanda Maharaja glowed with happiness at the celebration of his son's birth. He opened wide the doors of his treasury and gave charity without restriction. Drowning in a flood of happiness, the beggars loudly praised the king's charity that fulfilled all their desires.

At first the king of Vraja and his subjects experienced a happiness within measured limits, but when child Krishna, the Supreme Lord, arrived, everyone's happiness at once passed beyond all limits. Behind Krishna came Sri Balarama, Sridama, Ujjvala, and many other children. Shining with great lustre, these boys made Vraja appear like the peak of a mountain of jewels. Filled with transcendental glory and opulence, Govinda and the other boys filled with happiness the homes of the fortunate cowherd men headed by Maharaja Nanda in Vrajabhumi.

Even though Lord Krishna, the son of Maharaja Nanda, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate goal of all living entities, he still considers that the supreme goal of his life is Sri Radha, who has fathomless beauty and numberless transcendental qualities, and who appeared in the holy abode of Vraja as the daughter of Kirtida-devi. ❀

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A free bi-monthly service provided by:
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Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 110 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

30 August 2005

Śrī Annadā Ekādaśī, 11 Hṛṣīkeśa, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,607

Highlights

• PRAY TO RADHARANI

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• SRI RADHA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

• THE APPEARANCE OF SRIMATI RADHARANI

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• RADHA'S JOYFUL APPEARANCE

Uddhava Das

• ALWAYS CHANT THE NAMES OF RADHA KRISHNA!

From the Oriya Padāvalī of Bhakta Kavi Gopal Krishna

PRAY TO RADHARANI

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Today is Srimati Radharani's birthday, *Rādhāṣṭamī*. So we called you for a meeting. Radharani is the source



of spiritual inspiration. Our request to everyone present here today is that you should pray to Radharani. This word *hare* or *harā* indicates Radharani. This repetition of addressing Radha and Krishna or Hare Krishna is to pray, "My dear Lord, and spiritual energy of the Lord, kindly engage me in your service. I am now embarrassed to be engaged with this material service. Please engage me in your service." This is good sense. We are servants here. We are engaged in so many services. But it is not giving us comfort. Krishna is *param brahman*. He cannot enjoy anything material. He has to create the source of enjoyment by his own spiritual potency. That is Radharani. Radharani is described in the *śāstra*: *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtīr hlādinī-śaktir asmād* (Cc. ādi 1.5). She is Krishna's *hlādinī-śakti*, she gives pleasure to Krishna. Today is *Rādhāṣṭamī*. If we pray to Srimati Radharani she will be kind. Therefore in

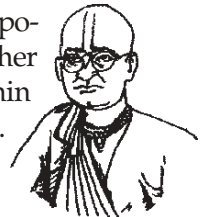
Vrindavan everywhere you will hear, "Jaya Radhe!" If Radharani is pleased with you then you will be able to approach Krishna very easily. That is the goal of our life. *vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā man-mayā mām upāśritāḥ* — You cannot take shelter of Krishna directly. You have to take shelter of His potency (Bg. 4.10). ❀

— Lecture in Calcutta, September 1974.

SRI RADHA

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Prabhupada*

To be able to observe the lofty position of Srimati Radharani and her confidential associates is not within the realm of common people. Only those who engage constantly in intimate, confidential and eternal loving service to her understand this sacred truth. No one can fathom the mysteries and esoteric implications of such pastimes except her confidential associates.



The day when our link with this material world is limited to the barest necessities, when our trivial opinions, concocted austerities, pious works, so-called knowledge, and mystic power are considered worthless like straw, when our worship of Narayan in his mood of

majesty is not relishable in the least, when we are not inclined at all to be out-spoken in the confidential topics of divine pastimes like the *rāsa* dance, only then will we be fit candidates to receive such confidential information.

The service to their lordships Sri Sri Radha Govinda is not expressible in common language. The use of the words *svakīya*, belonging to oneself, and *parakīya*, belonging to others, usually become intermingled with our own intense residual desires for sense gratification. It is for this reason, lack of qualified people, that the divine pastimes of Sri Radha Krishna cannot be discussed, heard and understood by the common people of this world. To say that there are very few qualified people is not an exaggeration.

— Lecture, from an unknown time and place.

THE APPEARANCE OF SRIMATI RADHARANI

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

The *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* describes that once in the transcendental abode of Vrindavan, Krishnachandra was sitting on a golden throne under a *mādhavī* creeper. He was thinking of how to further relish the nectarean mellows of his pastimes. Due to this thought, by his mere will, Srimati Radharani appeared from the left side of his body. Radharani's form was the color of molten gold and was decorated with various ornaments. On her braid was a flower bouquet; on her breast a garland of pearls (*mukta mālā*); and around her waist hung an ornamented belt (*mekhala*). Beautiful golden earrings adorned her ears, and the anklets (*nūpura*) on her feet produced a tinkling sound.

Radha is the enchanter of Madhava — *rādhā-mādhava-mohini*. In the *rāsa* dance she gave so much pleasure to him, but still she considered how to give him even more pleasure. As soon as she desired this, immediately innumerable *gopīs*, all looking like Srimati, immediately expanded from her body.

In the *Padma Purāṇa*, *uttara-khaṇḍa*, Shivaji told Parvati about the appearance of Radha: "Vrishabhanu Maharaja was a great devotee of the Lord. His chaste and devoted wife was named Kirtida. It is from her womb that *jagan-mātā*, the mother of the whole world, Sri Radha, took birth. This auspicious appearance of Brajeswari occurred at noon on the eighth day of the bright fortnight in the month of

Bhādrava. Seeing that such a beautiful daughter was born to the king, all the *gopa* families of Gokul became very joyful. Everyone's desires were fulfilled. King Vrishabhanu gave immense charity to the *brāhmaṇas*, *vaiṣṇavas*, musicians, dancers, and poor men.

"One day, Narada Muni came to the quarters of King Vrishabhanu to have *darśana* of Radharani. The sage inquired about his and his kingdom's welfare. In a humble mood, the king replied, 'Because of your mercy, everything is auspicious. You are such a great *sādhū*. Wherever you go becomes a *tīrtha*. By your grace, everyone can get *hari-bhakti*.'

"Saying this, Vrishabhanu Maharaja placed his daughter, whose eyes were still closed, on the lap of Narada Muni. By the touch of Radharani, the sage became ecstatic, the hairs on his body stood on end, and tears like torrential rain flowed from his eyes. In his heart, Narada Muni began to offer prayers to the little girl.

"You are *hari-priya*, dear to Lord Hari; *mahābhāva-svarūpa*, the personification of the highest love; *govinda-mohinī*, the enchanter of Govinda; *kṛṣṇa-prāna-rūpa*, the life and soul of Krishna; *ānanda-svarūpa*, the very embodiment of bliss. You are *bhakti* and *tapa*. All of the demigods headed by Brahma and Shiva meditate on your lotus feet. All of Krishna's consorts such as the *gopīs*, the queens in Dwarka, and even Mahalakshmi are plenary portions of you. Throughout the universe you are known as *ādi-śakti*, the original potency.'

"Hearing the prayers of Narada Muni, Radharani mercifully showed her form to him. The *muni* beheld a vision of Radhika seated upon a throne studded with divine gems, under the shade of a wish-fulfilling tree. Innumerable *sakhīs*, some fanning her, some waving *cāmaras*, and others holding a white umbrella over her head, surrounded her. Brajeswari's body was covered with beautiful transcendental garments. Her forehead was decorated with designs drawn with *sindhura*, and a glow emanated from her body. By her mercy, Radharani revealed this beautiful form to Narada Muni, and he alone could see it.

"All the while, Radhika, in the form of a baby, was lying on the lap of Narada Muni. Narada Muni returned the child to her father, seated with his queen before

the great ṛṣi. The sage said, 'You are most fortunate, *mahā-bhāgyavan*, because you have such a wonderful daughter. Kamala, Parvati, Arundhati, Sachi, and Satyabhama are all just plenary portions or portions of plenary portions of Radharani. No one is as dear to Lord Hari as she. Because of your daughter, all of Gokul will be filled with opulence. Do not feel sorry that you have a girl. Because of her, your glory will spread far and wide.'

"With folded hands, King Vrishabhanu asked, 'Who will be her husband?' The great sage replied, 'She will be the wife of the supreme *purusa*. And in the course of time her eyes will open.' Saying this, Narada Muni left."

After hearing this account, Parvati inquired of Shivaji, "Why were Radharani's eyes not open?"

Shivaji said: "O Devi, this is another wonderful story. When Lord Hari wanted to descend to this material world, he called Radha and said, 'You, too, will take birth there with me. We will manifest wonderful *līlās* together.'

"Then Radha said, 'O my dear lotus-eyed Hari, if I take birth in the material world I will be so distressed. How can I bear to see other men? I only want to see you. I refuse to look upon the form of another.'

"Krishna said, 'O Devi, please do not feel such anxiety. Your desire will be fulfilled.'

"Lord Hari took birth as the son of Nanda Maharaja in order to protect the *sādhus* – *sādhurakṣa kare*. Radha took birth from the womb of Kirtida as the daughter of Vrishabhanu.

"Because of the birth of the divine couple, the whole universe became exuberant. But Radha's eyes were not open. Seeing this, Kirtida Maharani was alarmed."

Parvati then inquired, "Please tell me how Radharani opened her eyes."

Shivaji said, "I will tell you. Simply by hearing this account one receives transcendental happiness.

"King Vrishabhanu held a great festival on the auspicious occasion of his daughter's birth. He invited all the cowherd men and women, extending a special invitation to Nanda Maharaja and Yashodarani. Nanda Maharaja and his wife arrived at the palace of King Vrishabhanu by bullock cart.

"Maharaja Vrishabhanu welcomed Nanda Maharaja, embracing him. Kirtida welcomed Yasoda-mata, embracing her.

"The magnificent festival continued; all different kinds of instruments were played

— kettle-drums, bugles, violins, vina, etc. Meanwhile, in the inner quarters of the palace, Sri Radha was sleeping in her cradle. Lord Hari, who is the *antaryāmī*, supersoul in the hearts of all living entities, knew this.

"Unnoticed by anyone, baby Krishna went to Radharani. Seeing the face of his consort, Krishna smiled, laughing in his mind. Then he put his lotus palm over her eyes. As soon as she felt the touch of Krishna, she immediately opened her eyes and saw his face. They had eye to eye union, Radha and Krishna. Both of them were very, very blissful.

"Kirtida had just come there and she saw what had happened. Taking the baby girl onto her lap, she happily exclaimed, 'Krishna gave eyes to Radha. Therefore this girl will be very dear to Krishna.' Hearing this, Mother Yasoda's heart was filled with joy."

This is the inconceivable *līlā* of Krishna. By the mercy of Hari and guru it is described in *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* and *Padma Purāṇa*.

Śrīmatī rādhārāṇī ki jaya!

Kāna-māna-mohinī rādhārāṇī ki jaya!

Vṛndāvana-vilāsinī rādhārāṇī ki jaya!

Aṣṭa-sakhī-śīromaṇi rādhārāṇī ki jaya!

Vṛṣabhānu nandinī śrīmatī rādhārāṇī ki jaya! ❀

— Lecture, 2 September 1995.

RADHA'S JOYFUL APPEARANCE

Uddhava Das

Uddhava Das was a prominent Gaudiya Vaishnava poet of early eighteenth century Bengal who wrote many songs about the pastimes of Radha and Krishna.

vṣabhānu-pure āji ānanda bādhāi

ratnabhānu subhānu nācaye tina bhāi

Today in the house of Vrishabhanu, the three brothers Ratnabhanu, Subhanu and Vrishabhanu dance in jubilation, celebrating their wonderful good fortune.

dadhi ghr̥ta navanīta go-rasa haladi

āṇande āṅgane ṭāle nāhika avadhi

At the ecstatic festival in the courtyard there is no limit to the flow of yoghurt, ghee, cream, milk, turmeric etc.

gopa gopī nāce gāya jāya gaḍāgadi

mukharā nācaye buḍī hāte laiyā naḍi

The cowherd men and women dance, sing, and roll on the ground in ecstasy. The old lady Mukhara also dances, holding a stick in her hand.

*vṛṣabhānu rājā nāce antara-ullāse
ānanda bādhāi gīta gāya cāri pāśe*

Delighted in his heart, King Vrishabhanu dances. In all of the four directions everyone sings with pleasure.

*lakṣa lakṣa gābhī vatsa alankṛta kari
brāhmaṇe karaye dāna āpanā pāsari*

Forgetting himself, Vrishabhanu Maharaja donates millions of cows decorated with jewels to the *brāhmaṇas*.

*gāyaka nartaka bhāṭa kare utarola
deha deha leha leha śuni ehi bola*

The singers, dancers, and professional reciters make a tumultuous sound, “Give, give, take, take”.

*kanyāra vadana dekhi kīrtidā janani
ānande avaśe deha āpanā nā jāni*

Looking at the face of her daughter, Mother Kirtida becomes stunned in ecstasy and completely forgets herself.

*kata kata pūrṇa-candra jiniyā udaya
e dāsa uddhava heri ānanda hrdaya*

This vision of Srimati Radharani’s appearance, which defeats the vision of unlimited full moons, gives Uddhava Das great pleasure in his heart.

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir

National Highway No. 5, IRC Village

Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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ALWAYS CHANT THE NAMES OF RADHA KRISHNA!

*From the Oriya Padāvalī of
Bhakta Kavi Gopal Krishna*

(*rāga*—*māyāmālāba gaudā, tāḷa*—*ekatālī*)

*rādhā kṛṣṇa nāma cintāmaṇiki
bhaja-re mānasa sadā eṇiki* (refrain)

O mind! Always chant the names of Radha and Krishna, which are fabulous gems that satisfy all desires.

*pāilu śrī guru- devaṇika kṛpāru
āge kara jaya-śrī pūraṇiki* (1)

By the mercy of Sri Gurudev you have received these holy names. So go on chanting them, being filled with thoughts of their glories!

*sa-rasa cetana pūrṇa sanātana
bāsa yāa-nā-re āu keṇiki* (2)

These names are sweet and blissful and are the full, eternal manifestation of the Supreme Lord. Be peaceful and satisfied and don’t think that you require anything else.

*nāhiṇṭi antara abhidhā nāmara
dāka mathāpare yodī pāṇiki* (3)

Just chant, all the time sprinkling upon your head the water of this understanding: There is no difference between these names and Radha-Krishna themselves.

*svapana jāgare śuci aśucire
antaḥkaraṇare puṇi puṇiki* (4)

Whether sleeping or awake, in a clean or unclean condition, remember these names again and again.

*prema-bhakti rasa jāṇkara niryāsa
ethu baḷi āu nāhiṇ teṇiki* (5)

The essence of these holy names is the ecstatic mellow of devotional love. Don’t consider it to be anything else.

*miḷilā ethara bhāḷilāra tora
kari nartana bajā kaphoṇiki* (6)

Such names you have gotten that if you really understand your good fortune you will jump up and down, slapping your sides with your elbows out of happiness!

*gopāla-kṛṣṇa prāṇa abasara
kāle bolāibu gale yeṇiki* (7)

Gopal Krishna got this opportunity in his life! O my mind, wherever you may go and whatever you may do, always chant these holy names! ❀

—Fakir Mohan Das. *Bhakta Kavi Gopala Krishna*. Sahitya Akademi. New Delhi. 2002.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 111 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

14 September 2005 Śrī Pārśva Ekādaśī, 26 Hṛīṣīkeśa, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,612

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The story of how Ramanujacharya's disciple Govinda took sannyāsa

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SANNYASA AND FAMILY LIFE

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



In this article, we pose certain commonly asked questions about sannyāsa and family life, with answers from the teachings of Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

What is sannyāsa?

Just like Arjuna. He sacrificed his whole family for Krishna. In the beginning he hesitated, "How can I kill my family members in this fight?" And when he became Krishna conscious, "Never mind, I shall kill all of them." This is called sacrifice. This is Krishna consciousness. He sacrificed all sentiments, all connections, everything, for Krishna. That is called *sannyāsa*, real *sannyāsa*. Although he was a warrior, a fighter, a householder having more than dozen wives, still he was *sannyāsa*, because he sacrificed everything for Krishna. That is wanted. That is Krishna consciousness.

— Lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā*. Los Angeles. 20 December 1968

What is the recommended āśrama in this age?

Generally, if one can remain a *brahmacārī* it is very convenient. And from *brahmacārī*, one can take *sannyāsa*. But in this age of Kali,

Bhaktivinode Thakura recommends that it is better to cultivate Krishna Consciousness as a householder.

— Letter to Mandali Bhadra. 2 November 1969

Without a husband, women have great difficulty making spiritual advancement. We have to develop a perfect society with scientific arrangement for making spiritual progress. With so many women in the society, what shall they do? They have also come to Krishna. We cannot reject them. Therefore I have advised my students to get married. I was a householder, and my Guru Maharaja was a life-long *brahmacārī*. We are doing the same work of preaching Krishna Consciousness, so what is the difference between *gr̥hastha* and *brahmacārī*? Actual *sannyāsa* means that one has given everything to Krishna. So practically you are already *sannyāsa*. But if you have got a wife, and if she is desirous to raise children, then she will not be very happy if you go away. It is not our business to create havoc. If the wife is very strong then she will appreciate if you take *sannyāsa*. But if there is any question at all then it should be avoided. Just like I never liked my wife, but I knew it was my duty to stay with her until my sons were grown-up. Then I left. If you give your wife one child, then she will be happy and she will have

some life-long occupation. You must consider that.

— Letter. 17 December 1972

Is it necessary to leave one's Krishna-conscious wife to take *sannyāsa*?

If you have taken a wife for *gr̥hastha* life, why are you neglecting her? That is not *vaiṣṇava*. *Vaiṣṇava* means one is very much responsible. And if he is a householder then he must be responsible. I cannot give *sannyāsa* to any devotee who has not proven himself to be responsible in all respects. Better you prove yourself first by being an ideal householder and forget all this nonsense.

— Letter. 16 July 1972

Regarding taking *sannyāsa*, this mentality that either I will have sex life or I will take *sannyāsa* is not proper. *Sannyāsa* means that one is finished with material life. You have gotten married and are in family life, so you should remain there. You thought that by getting married you would expand your service, so you should do that. Actually, all of my disciples are *sannyāsīs* because they have surrendered everything in the service of Krishna.

— Letter 21 November 1975

Forget taking *sannyāsa* order for the time being. Unless your child is born, there is no question of taking *sannyāsa*. We shall consider the matter further when your child is born. Now you should take care of your wife. The woman should be cared for, especially during pregnancy. At the time of the marriage ceremony there is a promise that the husband will care for the wife throughout her life and the woman will serve the husband throughout his life. When the child is grown up then the husband can take *sannyāsa*.

— Letter. 5 August 1971

Should women take *sannyāsa*?

Regarding “swamis” and “swaminis”, you have been misinformed. Among my disciples there is only one swami, *sannyāsī*, but there is no “swamini.” Women are never offered *sannyāsa* in the Vedic culture.

— Letter. 16 July 1970

The spirit soul is equal in either a man or woman. One who is actually engaged in the service of Krishna, there is no such distinction as man or woman. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, 6th chapter, 1st verse it is stated:

*anāśritaḥ karma-phalaṁ kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ
sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca na niraṅgīr na cākriyaḥ*

One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic, not he who lights no fire and performs no duty.

Anyone who is acting for Krishna is a *sannyāsī* or *sannyāsīni*. It is also stated: *striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te 'pi yānti parāṁ gatim* — Though they be of lower birth, women, merchants, and workers can attain the supreme destination. Spiritually everyone is equal. But materially a woman cannot be given *sannyāsa*.

— Letter. 4 February 1976

WHEN THE LORD IS PRESENT NO DARK ACT IS POSSIBLE

*The story of how Ramanujacharya's
disciple Govinda took *sannyāsa**

Govinda was the maternal cousin of Srila Ramanujacharya, the empowered *ācārya* of the Śrī Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya. In the beginning of his life Govinda worshiped Lord Shiva, but later became a *vaiṣṇava* and a disciple of Ramanuja. A devoted disciple, Govinda saw Ramanuja as the ever-present Supreme Lord [Ramanuja is considered to be an incarnation of Laksman]. Absorbed in this realization, he experienced neither solitude nor darkness. God in Ramanuja's form ever filled his outer eyes as well as his inner vision. Hence he felt no solitude. He never left Ramanuja's side, and was always engaged in listening to his discourses on spiritual life.

Govinda's mother Dyutimati once approached her son while he was seated within Ramanuja's hearing and informed him that as his wife had come of age it was proper for him to conceive a child with her. Govinda told her, “Mother, let her come when there is solitude and darkness.” Several days went by and when

Govinda still had not approached his wife, Dyutimati complained to Ramanuja about his apparent unwillingness to follow the injunctions of Vedic household life to give his wife a child.

Ramanuja instructed Govinda that he should act according to his mother's desire, and for at least one night he should remain with his wife. Govinda bowed assent. A feast was made for the occasion of the nuptial ceremony, and Govinda and his wife were then left together in a bedroom. Left alone with his wife, all that night Govinda talked to her about the philosophy and teachings of Ramanuja. With great ecstasy he spoke to her about Lord Vishnu and his glories, his opulences, and wonders.

Finally, morning arrived and relatives came to offer congratulations to the happy couple. Dyutimati, who was staying in a room next to the young couple, overheard him speaking *hari-kathā* all night to his wife. She chastised her son, "How is it that you were giving a religious sermon all night to your wife in your nuptial chamber?"

"Mother," replied Govinda, "when God is in my heart and is present everywhere and always watching me, how can I escape from him? How can I feel myself alone and in a private place? How then is it possible for me to do anything other than contemplate on him and sing his praises? Without solitude, no secret act is possible; and without darkness, no dark act is possible."

This discussion between Govinda and his mother was reported to Ramanuja. "Govinda," he said, calling him to his side, "You have passed the greatest test. Due to your distaste for worldly life you cannot be a materialist. However, the *śāstra* requires everyone to belong to some definite *āśrama* or order of life. Since you cannot be a householder you should accept the order of *sannyāsa*." This was Govinda's wish and he begged Ramanuja to confer *sannyāsa* upon him at once. It was done and Ramanuja gave him his own *sannyāsa* name, Emberumanar, he whose grace and compassion surpasses even the Lord's. "Noble sire," said Govinda, "this name is too great an honor to put upon a humble

creature like me. Bless me with a name that a shadow like me deserves. "Then," Ramanuja said gracefully, "let it be Embar, the shadow or abbreviated form of Emberumanar".

— Adapted from *Sri Ramanujacharya*, by Sri Alkondavalli Govindacharya. Sri Nrisimhapriya Trust. Chennai. 2004.

SANNYASA IS FOR PREACHING

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Vaiṣṭya-aṣṭaka 1.8

āra eka "śo-batal" pracāra tare
prabhura sannyāsa yei māyāvādī hare

There is another type of "show-bottle" display, used solely for the purpose of preaching. That is Lord Chaitanya's acceptance of the *sannyāsa āśrama* by which the Māyāvādīs are defeated. ❧

— From *The Poetry of Srila Prabhupada*. Translated by Dasarath Suta Das. Nectar Books. Union City, Georgia, USA. 1998.

THE SON OF SACHI LEAVES HOME TO TAKE SANNYASA

Srila Raya Ramananda

The following songs were collected by the Orissan State Museum in Bhubaneswar from palm leaf manuscripts written in Oriya script. In 1992 they published these and some other rare songs of Raya Ramananda in a book titled, Rāya Rāmānanda Padyāvalī.

nadiāte bhaktagana sakali milila
harināma dhūnī gorā nadīyā kampāla he (1)

sanyāsake jāba boli bole gauramanī
mātāra āgare kahe atirasa khānī (2)

śuna māye ogo āmi sannyāsake jāba
kabu mātā āmi gṛhakhāne rakhāiba (3)

śuni śacī ṭhākūrānī kāndiyām bolite
na jā-a sannyāse gorā āmāre chādite (4)

rāye rāmānanda bole vikala hoila
navīna kuñcita keśa gaura muṇḍāila (5)

muṇḍāila keśabhāra kapinī daṇḍa kamaṇḍala

Gathered together with Gauranga, the devotees performed such uproarious *hari-nāma* that all of Nadia trembled. (1)

The golden jewel Gauranga told His mother the unbearable news that he was about to take *sannyāsa*. (2)

“Listen, O mother! I will accept *sannyāsa*. How long will you keep me in this house?” (3)

Hearing this, Sachi Thakurani started to cry and said, “O Gaura, don’t go. Don’t leave me.” (4)

Raya Ramananda says, “I have become perturbed! Gaura has shaved off His youthful curly hair.” (5)

Coda: Cutting the burden of his hair, he has accepted a shaven head, loincloth, staff, and water pot.

muṇḍāila keśabhāra navīna ga-urabara
daṇḍa kamaṇḍala ka-upine (1)

dekhi śacī ṭhākuraṇī paḍila tucchā dharanī
kena keśa gaura muṇḍāila (2)

kāhāra mukha āmi cāite kemani rahibu grīhate
more sane nīa gaurāmanī (3)

tumi jadi sanyāse jāba āmire garala khāba
rāye rāmānanda rasavānī (4)

gaurācānda tumi thāki more nā kariā duḥkhī

Youthful Gaura has shaved his head and relieved himself of the burden of hair. He has accepted a *sannyāsa* *daṇḍa*, *kamaṇḍalu*, and *kaupīna*. (1)

Seeing this, Sachi Thakurani became faint and said, “Why has Gaura shaved his head?” (2)

“How can I live without seeing his face? How can I stay in this house? O Gauramani, take me with you.” (3)

Ray Ramananda says with feeling, “If you accept *sannyāsa*, then I will eat poison.” (4)

Coda: O Gaurachandra, stay here! Don’t put me in distress! ❧

— Translations by Bhakta Pradosh

RADHARANĪ’S LAMENT

Srila Rupa Goswami’s Padyāvalī, text 340

After Krishna had left for Mathura, Radha told Lalita, “Dear friend, if Krishna never returns to Vrindavan, then I will never attain him and he will also not get me. Bereft of his service, what then is the use in maintaining this troublesome body any longer?” She then prayed:

pañcatvaṁ tanur etu bhūta-nivahaḥ svāmīse
viśantu sphuṭaṁ

dhātāraṁ praṇipatya hanta śīrasā tatrāpi
yāce varam

tad-vāpīṣu payasa tadīya-mukure jyotis
tadīyāṅgaṇa-

vyomni vyoma tadīya-vartmani dharā tat-
tāla-vṛnte ‘nilaḥ

I bow my head before the creator and beg from him the benediction that when this body dies and it’s elements mix with the prime elements of gross matter, at that time may the water of my body mix with the water where Krishna performs his water sports. May the fire of my body enter Krishna’s mirror. May the ether of my body enter the sky around his courtyard. May the earth in my body merge in the paths where he walks, and may the air in my body be used to fan him. (By Sri Sanmasika) ❧

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 112 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

29 Sept 2005

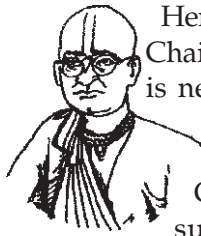
Śrī Indirā Ekādaśī, 11 Padmanābha, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,621

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Dviija Haridas

HUMILITY, REAL AND PRETENTIOUS *Prabhupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur*



Here are the words spoken by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu himself: "It is necessary to be humbler than a blade of grass if one is really anxious to take the name of Godhead." One never supplicates [prays to] another unless one realizes his own littleness. When we pray for the help of other persons we consider ourselves helpless. Sri Gaurasundar has told us to call upon the name of Godhead, which means that he has told us to accept the help of Godhead. He has also told us to be humbler than a blade of grass when we call upon the name of Godhead. If we call upon Godhead for converting him into our servant or if we want to take his help for doing any work on our own account we cannot preserve the quality of humility greater than that of the blade of grass. External exhibition of humility is not that quality of lowliness which makes one humbler than the blade of grass. Mere show of humility is nothing but insincerity or hypocrisy. That manner of calling that is responded to by one's subordinate

does not reach Godhead, because he is the supreme independent, perfect, self-conscious entity who is subject to none. It is necessary to fully establish oneself in the state of guileless humility. If this is not done one's prayer does not reach the perfect autocrat. Prayer to Godhead is impossible if one is absorbed with the attempt to merely destroy one's self-conceit.

There is another condition. While it is necessary to call upon Godhead by being humbler than a blade of grass, it is also necessary at the same time to be possessed of the quality of patience. If we are not patient we cannot call upon Godhead in the manner that will reach him. We become impatient whenever we covet anything. Covetousness is the opposite of humility. We must fully believe in Godhead. We must believe in his plenitude. We can have no wants if we call upon him. If we have this perfect faith we cannot be lacking in patience. On the other hand, if we are covetous, if we are betrayed into inconstancy [fickleness] by our impatience, if we secretly cherish any plan of gaining our object by means of any ability or merit of our own, then we are no longer in the condition to call upon Godhead. ❀

— Page 259-260. *Sri Chaitanya's Teachings*. Edited by Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Goswami. Sree Gaudiya Math. Madras. 1989.

WHO UNDERSTANDS BHAGAVATAM?

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Devotional service includes nine processes, beginning with hearing, chanting and remembering the activities of Lord Vishnu. Only one who has taken to devotional service can understand *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, which is the spotless *Purāṇa* for a transcendentalist (*paramahansa*). So-called commentaries are useless for this purpose. All Vedic literatures maintain that *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* has to be learned from the person *bhāgavata*, and to understand it one has to engage in pure devotional service. So-called erudite scholars or grammarians cannot understand it. Only one who has developed pure Krishna consciousness and has served the pure devotee, the spiritual master, can understand *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

— Purport to Cc. *madhya* 24.313.

KRISHNA OR MAYA KIRTANA?

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Some people say, “*nānā muni nānā mata*” or “*jata mata tata patha*” — there are many *munis*, many philosophies, and many paths. But this is not true. It is only cheating. Only the descending path is the perfect path. We are conditioned souls. We cannot understand *tattva*, spiritual truth, by dint of our material knowledge. We cannot relate to the Supreme Personality of Godhead or his energy. Puffed up by material mundane knowledge, conditioned souls speculate and give their own theories. Sometimes one becomes puffed up by being a great renunciate, *tyāgī*, like Gandhi, who also gave his own theory. Sometimes learned scholars interpret the Vedas in their own way by their mundane scholarship. This is all cheating.

In the material world, every person has their own opinion, and all opinions differ from one another. So there are thousands and thousands of opinions. If we accept such opinions then we'll be cheated. But if the original cause of this creation manifests himself out of his causeless mercy and showers his causeless mercy on us, then we can understand *tattva*. Otherwise we will be cheated. Therefore *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.23) says:

*nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahudhā śrutena
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*

You cannot understand this *paramātmā-tattva* — the truth relating to the Supreme Lord or Supersoul — by dint of your own intelligence, by dint of your mundane scholarship or knowledge, or by hearing many *pravacanas* — speeches from *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, yogis, and speculators.

The Supersoul is a form of the Lord. He is known as the *caitya-guru*, the guru residing in the heart of every living entity. When he showers his mercy on an aspiring devotee who is very eager to understand the truth, he assumes a form — the form of Sri Guru — and speaks spiritual truth through him.

Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came and gave a very easy process to know *tattva*. Unless the heart of the conditioned soul is purified, cleansed of material dirt, one cannot understand spiritual truth. Therefore he gave *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, chanting of the holy name of Krishna. But this *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* should actually be *kīrtana* of the pure name of the Krishna. We should not consider the *kīrtana* of *māyā* as *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. This *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is all auspicious in the world, and Gaurasundar, Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, has taught us this thing by giving the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

The conditioned soul has four defects — *bhrama* (the tendency to commit mistakes), *pramāda* (the tendency to be illusioned), *vipralipsā* (the tendency to cheat), and *karaṇāpāṭava* (imperfect senses). Because of these defects, a conditioned soul must be bewildered. Such a conditioned soul thinks that the two letters *kṛṣ* – *ṇa*, are material, and that the name of Krishna is simply a word in the dictionary. Their perception is not *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. If someone thinks like this, then he will be cheated of this great philosophy. The name of Krishna and the alphabets that make up his name are non-different from Krishna. They are all transcendental. Therefore Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada Maharaja says if real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is present then the whole atmosphere will be purified and the hearts of the living entities will be purified [See Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's articles in *Bindus* 8 and 83]. *Krishna-kīrtana* is not *kīrtana* done for the purpose of obtaining material enjoyment. In villages sometimes there is an epidemic of cholera, so people do *kīrtana* to drive out the disease. This is not *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*.

If there is real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, then even the impersonalists, *māyāvādīs*, will be purified.

Their defective intelligence will go away. By such *kīrtana*, those who are atheists will become devotees and be easily liberated. When Mahaprabhu manifested his pastimes, there were so many *māyāvādīs* like Prakasananda Saraswati and his thousands of followers in Kasi. They all became devotees by the *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* of Sriman Mahaprabhu. By Mahaprabhu's *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* many materially attached people, *viṣayī-loka*, also got perfection. The example is King Prataparudra. Real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* also gives liberation to trees, stones, beasts, animals, birds, and all living beings. The example is when Mahaprabhu went through the Jharikhanda jungle. The trees, creepers, beasts, birds, deer, tigers, and lions all chanted *hare kṛṣṇa* and got liberation.

But nowadays we find that real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is rarely being done. Therefore people are suffering and they cannot get liberation. Sriman Mahaprabhu is the most munificent incarnation. He came here for the welfare of every living entity, even the animate and inanimate. He performed this *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* for all. Therefore one who is intelligent, a really learned and wise person, should accept this teaching given by Sriman Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and accept a bona fide spiritual master who comes in this *brahma-madhva-gauḍīya-sampradāya*, the succession coming from Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. They will get mercy. And by doing this real *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* such a person can deliver the whole world. Otherwise there will be no deliverance at all.

This is Kali-yuga, the most degraded age. Sinful activities are rampant. However, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came, and *kali-kukkura-kadana* — crushed the dog of Kali-yuga [Bhaktivinoda Thakur's, *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, song 3.4.1]. Mahaprabhu gave four regulative principles: no meat eating, no intoxication, no illicit-sex life, and no gambling. These are the four pillars of sinful activity. If someone strictly observes these four regulative principles, accepts a bona fide spiritual master coming in the disciplic succession of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and chants *hare kṛṣṇa*, he'll be in Satya-yuga, not Kali-yuga. So where is the question of sin? But those who don't do it, they are in Kali-yuga. Kali is there.

Devotee: You said that if someone is chanting the holy name but they have some ulterior motive, that's not the real name. What, then, is the position of devotees like

myself who are chanting *hare kṛṣṇa* and trying to become purified, but other desires are there. For example, a *grhastha* wants a house, or a *brahmacārī* wants a stereo tape recorder.

Gour Govinda Swami: You should accept all these things for the service of Krishna, not for your own sense gratification. Otherwise there will be no *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, it will be *māyā's kīrtana*.

Devotee: So when we're chanting *hare kṛṣṇa*, even if desires are there, if we. . .

Gour Govinda Swami: Just redirect those desires for serving Krishna, then it's all right.

Devotee: Then our *kīrtana* can actually purify others as well as ourselves?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, yes. Definitely! ❧

— Morning lecture in Bhubaneswar on 15 September 1989.

CHASTISED FOR BEING INATTENTIVE

From the Life of Srila Rasikananda Prabhu

Rasikananda Prabhu was the foremost disciple of Srila Syamananda Prabhu, who in turn was one of the leading students of Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhupada.

One day, Rasikananda Prabhu was sitting along with his brothers discussing *Bhāgavata* in the court of the king of Rajagara known as Vaidyanatha Bhanja. The manager of the king's estates came and stood before the king. When Ramakrishna, a disciple of Rasika and a staunch devotee, saw the attention of the king wander from the *Bhāgavata*, he said, "Oh king, you are an ignorant fellow. You will give up hearing the nectarean topics of Lord Krishna just to hear from your manager?" Saying this, he slapped the face of the king and the king immediately fainted. Everyone in the assembly was very sorry to see this and the king's ministers were about to kill Ramakrishna for his impudence. However, anticipating the situation, the king quickly recovered and fell at the feet of Ramakrishna. With folded hands he announced to everyone, "I have committed a sin and for that I was punished. Rasik Prabhu is discussing the topics of Lord Krishna, but I allowed my attention to wander elsewhere. It is the verdict of all scriptures that topics other than those concerning Lord Krishna are like poison. That person who allows his attention to wander away from the topics of Krishna is a great sinner and is like dog or a pig which likes to eat rotten things. My brother Ramakrishna has rightly served me. He has saved me and shown proof of his affection

for me.” The king then took hold of the neck of Ramakrishna, and, to the astonishment of everyone, he began to weep. The king then took the hand of Ramakrishna and said, “Your hand must be pained after slapping my hard body.” Ramakrishna then had the king sit by his side and they continued to hear about Lord Krishna. ❧

—Page 90-91, *The Story of Rasikananda*, by Sri Gopijanavallabha Das. Published by Bhakti Vikasa Swami. Mumbai. 1997.

WORSHIP KRISHNA’S HOLY NAMES

Dvija Haridas

There are several followers of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who were known as Dvija Haridas. In “A History of Brajabuli Literature”, the scholar Sukumar Sen expresses his opinion that the poet Dvija Haridas was born in Kanchana Nagar in Bengal, but in his old age he lived in Vrindavan. The poet Dvija Haridas’ songs are still popular, and to this day are sung daily in the homes of devout vaiṣṇavas of Bengal.

(Dhānāśī-rāga)

govinda jaya jaya gopāla gadādhara
kṛṣṇacandra kara kṛpā karuṇā-sāgara

All glories, all glories to you, Lord Govinda, who protect the cows and hold a mace! O moonlike Krishnachandra! O ocean of mercy! Please be merciful to me.



SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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jaya guru govinda gopeśa giridhārī
śrī-rādhikāra prāṇa-dhana mukunda murāri

Glories to you, the spiritual master of all! O Govinda! O Lord of the cowherd boys! O lifter of Govardhana Hill! O treasure of Radhika’s life! O giver of liberation! O enemy of the demon Mura!

hari-nāma vine re govinda nāma vine
biphale manuṣya janma yāra dine dine

If one does not chant Lord Hari’s holy names or Lord Govinda’s holy names, day after day one passes this human birth without any good result.

dina yāya br̥thā kāje rātri yāya nide
nā bhajilāma rādhā-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāraovinde

My days and nights I passed in fruitless labor. I did not worship Sri Sri Radha and Krishna’s lotus feet.

kṛṣṇa bhajivāra tare saṁsāre āinu
michā māyāra baddha haiyā vṛkṣa samāna hainu

I came to this material world to worship Krishna. I was bound by the illusions of māyā and I became dull like a tree.

kāla-kali pāpa-prapañca prāktana-vaśe
nāhi maje hāya jīva kṛṣṇa-nāma rase

Alas! By the influence of my past sinful activities and the age of Kali I did not immerse myself in the sweet mellow of Krishna’s names.

kṛṣṇa-nāma bhaja jīva āra saba miche
palāite patha nāi yama āche piche

Just worship Lord Krishna’s holy names, O jīva! All else is illusion! There is no alternative, as Yamaraj is following you!

kṛṣṇa-nāma hari-nāma baḍa-i madhura
yei jana kṛṣṇa bhaje se baḍa catura

Kṛṣṇa-nāma and hari-nāma are very sweet. Those who worship Krishna are very intelligent.

ye nāma śravaṇe haya pāpa vimocana
dvija hari-dāsa kahe nāma-saṅkīrtana

By hearing this name one becomes free from sin. The brāhmaṇa Haridas thus performs saṅkīrtana of the holy name. ❧

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 113 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

14 October 2005 Śrī Pāśāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī, 25 Padmanābha, 519 Gaurābda Circulation 1,629

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THE MOST GLORIOUS PLACE

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



The spiritual world is three fourths of the total creation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it is the most exalted region. The spiritual world is naturally superior to the material world;

however, Mathura and the adjoining areas, although appearing in the material world, are considered superior to the spiritual world because the Supreme Personality of Godhead himself appeared at Mathura. The interior forests of Vrindavan are considered superior to Mathura because of the presence of the twelve forests (*dvādaśa-vana*) such as Talavan, Madhuvan and Bahulavan, which are famous for the various pastimes of the Lord. Thus the interior Vrindavan forest is considered superior to Mathura. But superior to these forests is the divine Govardhana Hill because Krishna lifted Govardhana Hill like an umbrella, raising it with his lotus-like beautiful hand, to protect his associates, the denizens of Vraja, from the torrential rains sent by angry Indra, King of the demigods. It is also at Govardhana Hill that Krishna tends the cows with his cowherd friends, and there also he had his rendezvous with his most beloved Sri Radha and engaged in loving pastimes with her. Radha Kund, at the foot of Govardhana, is superior to

all because it is there that love of Krishna overflows. Advanced devotees prefer to reside at Radha Kund because this place is the site of many memories of the eternal loving affairs between Krishna and Radharani (*rati-vilāsa*).

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, madhya-līlā*, it is stated that when Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu first visited the area of Vrajabhumi he could not at first find the location of Radha Kund. This means that Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was actually searching for the exact location. Finally he found the holy spot, and there was a small pond there. He took his bath in that small pond and told his devotees that the actual Radha Kund was situated there. Later, Lord Chaitanya's devotees, headed first by the six Goswamis such as Rupa and Raghunath Das, excavated the pond. Presently there is a large lake known as Radha Kund there. Srila Rupa Goswami has given much stress to Radha Kund because of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's desire to find it. Who, then, would give up Radha Kund and try to reside elsewhere? No person with transcendental intelligence would do so. The importance of Radha Kund, however, cannot be realized by other *vaiṣṇava sampradāyas*, nor can persons uninterested in the devotional service of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu understand the spiritual importance and divine nature of Radha Kund. Thus, Radha Kund is mainly worshiped by the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, the followers of Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. ॐ

— Purport to *Nectar of Instruction*, verse 9.

PROPER OBJECTS FOR ANGER

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada



Question: Is being angry with someone who is malicious toward devotees a part of devotion?

Answer: We have to be angry with one who is malicious toward devotees; that is part of our devotional practice. To do otherwise is improper. But who is malicious to devotees? That concept has to be very clear. Those who do not serve the Supreme Lord, who is the friend of the whole world, who is supremely joyful, and who is in the heart of everyone, cannot do anything good for themselves; rather, they invite danger and inauspiciousness by being malicious toward Krishna and his devotees. Those are the ones who are malicious; we cannot show mercy to them. We have to show our indifference or anger to those who are intoxicatedly absorbed in the worship of *akṛṣṇa* (non-God). But first of all I have to see if I myself am an enemy of the devotees. It is essential to ask, “Am I serving Krishna or am I doing something else in the pretense of devotional service?” “How much love do I have for Krishna?” “Do I want to cheat Krishna?” “Do I want to enjoy what is meant for his enjoyment?”

I see that I, with my body that is greedy for enjoyment, am a great enemy of Krishna and his devotees. Instead of always remembering the lotus feet of Krishna and thinking of his happiness, I am engaged in the search for my own happiness, in gossip and faultfinding. I am not looking at myself at all; I am not seeing my own fault. Therefore, first of all I have to express anger toward myself — I who am such a great enemy of the devotees. I have to show anger toward myself by beating my mind with a pair of shoes. I have to purify myself. I have to try in every way to have an exemplary character and to sincerely serve *hari*, *guru*, *vaiṣṇavas*. Only then will I benefit. I have to constantly remember that everyone is serving the Lord; only I could not serve the Lord and I may die at any moment.

First of all, I have to express anger toward my bad tendencies that are unfavorable for devotion, such as my desire for material gain, prestige, and position, and my tendency toward deceitfulness. This way I have to control them. I have to look at my own interest first.

Otherwise great danger will come my way. Then I have to express anger toward my friends and relatives, related to my body, who are against guru and Krishna, who want to see me as an enjoyer and thus are attracting me to *māyā*. Only then will I be safe and the highest good will come to me, not otherwise.

— From *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing House. Eugene, Oregon. 1997. Translated from the Bengali book: *Srila Prabhupādera Upadeśāmṛta* (Nectar of Srila Prabhupada’s Instructions), compiled by Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Mayukha Bhagavata Maharaja. Mayapur. Sri Chaitanya Math, 1990.

RADHA KUND AND SHYAMA KUND

From *Srila Narahari Chakravarti’s*
Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara

[Raghava Pandit is speaking to Srinivas Acharya and Narottam Das Thakur:] “See ahead the village named Arita. The pastime Krishna performed here is an enchanting story. Once Krishna killed a demon in the form of a bull [Arishtasura]. Afterwards, when he wanted to touch Radharani, she smilingly told him, ‘Even though he was a demon, he had assumed the form of a bull. By killing him you have become contaminated. If you take bath at all the holy places, then you will be relieved of the offense of killing him.’

“Krishna sweetly replied, ‘I shall bathe in the water of all the holy places by calling them all here.’

“Speaking these words, he then stomped on the earth and created a depression which immediately filled up with the water of all the holy places. The personification of each holy place also appeared before Krishna, introduced herself, and offered prayers. In front of Radha and the *gopīs*, Krishna then took a bath in the water, while uttering the name of each holy place. He finished his bath some time before midnight. Even now people follow the same system of bathing in the holy *kuṇḍa*.

“Hearing Krishna speak some boastful words, Radha with the help of her *sakhīs* quickly dug her own *kuṇḍa*. The *kuṇḍa* dug by Radharani was most beautiful and the sight of it made Krishna feel very pleased. Radharani thought that she would fill her *kuṇḍa* with waters of the Manasi Ganga, which is the essence of all holy places. Understanding Radha’s desire, Krishna gave his order and the holy *tīrthas* entered Radha’s *kuṇḍa* from Shyama Kund. The personified holy places then glorified Radharani with

many prayers and, considering themselves fortunate, they became very pleased. From that time on these two *kuṇḍas*, which are surrounded by beautiful trees and plants, became the site of Radha and Krishna's wonderful amorous sports.

"In *Stavāvalī*, *Vraja-vilāsa*, there is the following description: "I take shelter of the meeting place of Radha Madhava's beloved Radha Kund and Shyama Kund, the site of their amorous sports. It is most charming, being surrounded by kadamba, campaka, beautiful young *āsoka*, mango, *punnāga* [white lotus], and *bakula* trees, as well as *lavaṅga* and *vāsanti* creepers."

"Radha Kund is most beautifully surrounded by the *kuñjās* of the eight *sakhīs* beginning with Lalita's. Shyama Kund is surrounded by the *kuṇḍas* of the eight *sakhīs* beginning with Subala's. They are most beautiful and pleasant to see.

The Glories of Radha Kund and Shyama Kund

"Shyama Kund is also known as Arishta Kund. Whoever bathes in Radha Kund and Shyama Kund gets the same results one achieves by the performance of a *rājasūya* and *āsvamedha-yajña*. This is confirmed in *Ādi-varāha Purāṇa*."

Raghava Pandit said that according to the *Purāṇas* there is no limit to the glories of Radha Kund. In the *Ādi-varāha Purāṇa*, *mathura-khaṇḍa*, it is stated that if a devotee of Vishnu offers a lamp to Radha Kund during the month of *Kārtika*, he will be able to see the entire universe.

In *Padma Purāṇa*, *Kārtika Māhātmya*, it is stated, "Radha Kund is very dear to Sri Hari and is situated near Govardhana Hill. By taking bath in Radha Kund on the eighth day of the waning moon in the month of *Kārtika* [*bahulāṣṭamī*], one can greatly please Lord Hari, who enjoys his pastimes there. This *kuṇḍa* is as dear to Krishna as Radha herself. Amongst all the *gopīs*, she is the dearest to Krishna. It is the duty of the devotees to bathe in the Radha Kund during the month of *Kārtika* and thereafter worship Lord Janardana. This simple worship pleases Krishna as much as one does by worshiping Janardana on the day of *Uthānā-ekādaśī*."

Mahaprabhu Discovers Radha Kund and Shyama Kund

Raghava Pandit told them, "See these two *kuṇḍas*, Radha Kund and Shyama Kund,

which are surrounded by beautiful forests and which enchant the sages and demigods. After visiting the other forests of Vrindavan, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came here and sat under this *tamāla* tree. He asked the residents of Arita-gram where the two *kuṇḍas* were, but no one could answer. The *brāhmaṇa* accompanying him from Mathura also did not know.

"Being the omniscient Personality of Godhead, Lord Chaitanya carefully searched and discovered the two *kuṇḍas* in two paddy fields. He joyfully took a bath in whatever little water was there and glorified the *kuṇḍas* in various ways. Then he marked his forehead with mud from the *kuṇḍas*.

"The villagers were startled by his behavior. One of them inquired, 'Where has this *sannyāsī* suddenly come from?' Someone said, 'O brother, by seeing him I cannot understand what is happening in my body.' Another person said, 'He cannot be a mortal *sannyāsī*. Seeing him I cannot explain what is happening in my mind.' Someone else said, 'Who says he is a *sannyāsī*? He is Krishna himself appearing in this dress and form. Just see the proof! Different birds are all coming for his *darśana*. The cuckoos and parrots are happily addressing him as Krishna, and the peacocks are dancing in jubilation. The different sounds of the birds are very pleasing to the ears. And see the wonderful blooming of the trees! O brother, just see the creepers showering flowers on this person, who is disguised as a *sannyāsī*. The deer are coming near him and staring one-pointedly at his face. All the cows are coming running from all sides with raised tails, and they also look at his face. By the tears of ecstasy falling from the eyes of these creatures we can understand that they are meeting him after a long period of time.'

"O brother, I repeatedly glorify the good fortune of these creatures, who are seeing Krishna in this form and dress. Dear brothers, let us offer obeisances unto the feet of the Lord, who has incarnated to distribute knowledge to the people. By his mercy we can now understand that these two paddy fields known as Kali and Gauri are actually holy *kuṇḍas*.' Speaking like this amongst themselves, they all became maddened by the nectarean sight of Mahaprabhu at this most holy site. Even Lord Brahma cannot describe a fragment of Mahaprabhu's ecstatic expression when he discovered these *kuṇḍas*.

Fulfillment of Das Goswami's Desire

"O Srinivas, presently these paddy fields are seen as two *kuṇḍas* full of water. Please listen while I briefly describe the transformation of the two paddy fields into beautiful *kuṇḍas*.

"One day, Raghunath Das Goswami suddenly considered to himself that if these *kuṇḍas* were filled with water it would be very good. Considering that for this purpose money would be needed, Raghunath Das remained silent. He scolded himself again and again, thinking why he had desired such a thing. Solacing himself, he decided to stay alone and behave cautiously for some time. However, when a devotee desires something; that cannot be denied, for Krishna always fulfills his devotees' desires.

"Meanwhile, one rich person had gone to Badarikashram to get the Lord's *darśana*. He offered Lord Narayan a large sum of money. That night in a dream the Lord ordered the man, 'Take this money to Arita-grama in Vraja. There you will find the best of the *vaiṣṇavas*, Raghunath Das. Give the money to him in my name. If Raghunath does not agree to take the money, you should remind him about his desire to clean the two *kuṇḍas* for bathing and drinking water.'

"Speaking these words, the Lord disappeared, and that sincere devotee happily came here to

Arita-grama. Going before Raghunath Das, he fell to the ground, offered his obeisances, and then gave the money to Raghunath. He explained the instruction given to him by the Lord in his dream. Raghunath became stunned for some time. He then began to praise his fortune and requested the rich man to excavate the two *kuṇḍas* without delay. Hearing this, that fortunate man was filled with ecstasy and proceeded to engage many people for the work. Very soon the *kuṇḍas* were dug out. Now hear why Shyama Kund was dug in an irregular shape.

"Everyone decided that the following day a few old trees on the bank of Shyama Kund should be cut. That night Raghunath had a dream in which King Yudhishtir told him, 'My brothers and I are living within those trees. Tomorrow morning go to Manasa-pavana-ghata, identify those five trees, and protect them from being cut.' After the dream, Raghunath went early the next morning identified the trees and ordered the people not to cut them. For that reason they were not able to make Shyama Kund square. The two *kuṇḍas* were then filled with clear water and Sri Raghunath became very satisfied." ❧

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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SHELTER OF RADHA KUND

Srila Raghunath Das Goswami's
Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam, text 2

vraja-bhuvi mura-śatroḥ preyaśīnām nikāmair
asulabham api tūrṇam prema-kalpa-drumam tvam
janayati hṛdi bhūmau snātur uccaiḥ priyam yat
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kuṇḍam evāśrayo me

Very dear and beautiful Radha Kund, that immediately makes a desire tree of pure love sprout in the land of the heart of anyone who bathes there, although this is very difficult to achieve even for the *gopīs*, beloveds of Lord Krishna in Vraja, is my only shelter!

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 114 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

28 Oct. 2005

Śrī Ramā Ekādaśī, 11 Dāmodara, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation, 1635

Highlights

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• DISCIPLESHIP IS ETERNAL

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• THE GLORIES AND POWER OF GOVARDHAN HILL

Extracts from Śrī Garga Saṁhitā, 3.10-11

FEELING SEPARATION IS REQUIRED

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Radharani thinks, "All others are engaged in Krishna's devotion, but I am not." Similarly, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I have not a pinch of devotion to Krishna.

Then if someone asks him, "Why you are crying?"

"To make a show." Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I am crying for Krishna just to advertise that I have become a big devotee, but actually I don't have a pinch of devotion for Krishna."

"No, you are such a great devotee. Everyone says."

"No. Everyone may say, but I am not."

"Why you are not?"

"Although I am separated from Krishna, still I am living. That is the proof that I have no love for Krishna."

This is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's statement. "If I had a drop of love for Krishna, how I could live so long without him?" This is love of Krishna, "How can I live in separation from Krishna?" This is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's philosophy. The Goswamis followed this. They never said, "Now I have seen Krishna."

*he rādhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-sūno kutaḥ
śrī-govardhana-kalpa-pādapa-tale kālindī-vane kutaḥ
ghoṣantāo iti sarvato vraja-pure khedair mahā-vihvalau
vande rūpa-sanātanaū raghu-yugau śrī jīva-gopālakau*

[next column](#)

They were simply feeling separation. They lived in Vrindavan, but they never said, "Last night I saw Krishna dancing." Rather, they said, "Krishna and the gopīs, Radharani, where are you all? Where are you? Are you near Govardhan Hill or on the bank of the river Yamuna? Where are you?" This is called *bhajana*, devotion in separation. We should increase our aspiration in this way more and more. That is required. That *āśā*, that hope, that expectation, will lead us to the topmost platform of devotion. ❀

— Bhagavad-gītā lecture in Hawaii. 8 February 1975.

DISCIPLESHIP IS ETERNAL

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee 1: You said that we should eternally remain as a disciple. Some devotees say we are eternally the disciple of one particular guru, one *jīva*. Is that correct?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. He is eternally my guru. I am eternally his disciple.

Devotee 1: What does "eternally guru" mean? The person who is appearing as guru may be different in different lifetimes. It may not be the same person.

Gour Govinda Swami: It is the same soul, not the body. *cakṣu-dāna dila yei, janme janme prabhu sei* — Life after life he is my master. [Narottam Das Thakur's *Śrī Guru-vandanā*]. My master is he who has opened my eyes. Which eyes? *Bhakti-cakṣu*, the eyes of devotion. That person is my master life after life — eternally. If you have that eye you can see him. "Oh, here is my guru."

Devotee 1: Some disciples have two spiritual masters. One may have a *dīkṣā-guru*, and a *śikṣā-guru*.

Gour Govinda Swami: *Dīkṣā-guru* is one, *śikṣā-gurus* are many.

Devotee 1: So the eternal relationship is with the *dīkṣā-guru* only?

Gour Govinda Swami: No. It is with the guru who occupies one's heart.

Devotee 1: Some say that it is only the *dīkṣā-guru* who is eternally my spiritual master life after life.

Gour Govinda Swami: That's not true. It is the guru who has occupied your heart, who has opened your eyes, who has given you *prema-bhakti*. Lochan Das Thakur says in *Caitanya-maṅgala* (*madhya* 11.195):

*se-i se parama bandhu, se-i mātā-pitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇe yei prema-bhakti-dātā*

He who has given me *prema-bhakti* at the lotus feet of Krishna, is my supreme friend. He is my father, he is my mother, he is everything.

Devotee 1: Some devotees say that the relationship with the spiritual master is also going on in Vrindavan, in the spiritual world?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Eternal means it is always going on — in the past, present and future.

Devotee 1: How can the guru-disciple relationship go on there?

Gour Govinda Swami: Why not? Krishna says, *rādhikāra prema-guru, āmi śiṣya naṭa* — Radharani is my guru and I am her disciple. When even Krishna says this, is it not true in your case?

Devotee 1: I was reading in *Prema-vivarta* that in the perfectional stage one is trained under Vishakha.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. *Sakhīs, mañjarīs*, the guru is one of them. He is *rādhā-prīya-sakhī* — an intimate companion of Srimati Radharani. Your relationship is eternal. You'll go there and serve under them. *nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai* — The guru is expert in making arrangements for the conjugal pastimes of Radha Krishna. [*Guro-aṣṭaka* 6]

Devotee 2: You once said that only a surrendered soul can hear. So what about those who hear, become attracted, and then surrender. What is their state?

Gour Govinda Swami: Attracted means they are surrendered. Otherwise this *kathā* will never enter... If he has no faith he cannot hear. One who is developing faith means he is a disciple. It means surrender.

Devotee 3: When a disciple has taken such a guru, then becomes perfect and goes to the transcendental world, does he work there under that same *mañjarī*?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Or she may hand the devotee over to someone else to take charge.

Devotee 3: So in that way the disciple is always under the same personality, here or in the transcendental realm?

Gour Govinda Swami: When it is an eternal relationship, yes. You cannot understand this with your material mind. It is inconceivable, *acintya*. How can our material mind conceive it? We just form an idea. But it is not exactly like that. All of these material logics won't help. Just accept it. ❧

— Discussion after class. Bhubaneswar. 1 April 1992.

THE GLORIES AND POWER OF GOVARDHAN HILL

Extracts from Śrī Garga Saṁhitā, 3.10-11

One day, in order to repay the debt he owed to the sages and ancestors, a *brāhmaṇa* named Vijaya went to Mathura, the holy place that removes all sins. After performing his religious duties, he went to Govardhan Hill and took one of the stones there. Going in a leisurely way from forest to forest, he finally left the circle of Vraja. At that moment, he saw a horrible *rākṣasa* monster approaching, having three heads, three chests, six arms, six legs, three hands, huge lips, and a huge nose. His hands were raised in the air. His seven-hands-long tongue moved to and fro, the hairs of his body were like a tangle of thorns, his eyes were red, and he had long, curved, frightening fangs. Wishing to eat him, the snorting monster approached the *brāhmaṇa*. The *brāhmaṇa* struck the monster with his *govardhana-śilā*. Hit by the stone from Govardhan Hill, the monster gave up his body.

The creature suddenly transformed into a handsome dark person with large lotus-petal eyes, dressed in yellow garments, garlanded with forest flowers, wearing a crown and earrings, holding a flute and stick, glorious as another Cupid, and his features like those of Lord Krishna. With folded hands he then bowed before the *brāhmaṇa* again and again. The liberated soul said, "O best of *brāhmaṇas*, you earnestly work for the salvation of others. O noble-hearted one, you have rescued me from a monster's life. Good fortune has

come to me simply by the touch of this stone. No one but you could have delivered me.”

The *brāhmaṇa* said, “I am astonished by your words. I have no power to deliver you. I don’t know how, simply by a stone’s touch, this has happened. O saintly one, please explain this.”

śrī-siddha uvāca

*gīrājō hare rūpaṁ śrīmān govardhano giriḥ
tasya darśana-mātreṇa naro yāti kṛtārthatām*

The liberated soul said, “Glorious Govardhan Hill, the king of mountains, is the personal form of Lord Krishna. Simply by seeing it one attains the supreme goal of life. (10.15)

*gandhamādana-yātrāyām yat phalaṁ labhate arāḥ
tasmāt koṭi-guṇaṁ puṇyam girirājasya darśane*

“By seeing Govardhan Hill one attains a pious result many millions of times greater than the results of a pilgrimage to Mount Gandhamadan. (10.16)

*pañca-varṣa-sahasrāṇi kedāre yat tapaḥ-phalam
tac ca govardhane vipra kṣaṇena labhate naraḥ*

“O *brāhmaṇa*, the same results one attains by performing austerities for five thousand years at Mount Kedara is attained in a single moment at Govardhan Hill. (10.17)

*malayādrau svarṇa-bhāra-dānasyāpi ca yat phalam
tasmāt koṭi-guṇaṁ puṇyam girirāje hi māsikam*

“By staying for one month at Govardhan Hill one attains a pious result many millions of times greater than the result of giving in charity a basket of gold in the Malaya Hills. (10.18)

*parvate maṅgala-prasthe yo dadyād dhema-dakṣiṇām
sa yāti viṣṇu-sārūpyaṁ yuktaḥ pāpa-śatair api*

*tat padaṁ hi naro yāti girirājasya darśanāt
gīrājā-samaṁ puṇyaṁ anyat tīrthaṁ na vidyate*

Even though he has committed hundreds of sins, a person who at Mount Mangala gives gold in charity attains a spiritual form like Lord Vishnu’s. That same result is attained simply by seeing Govardhan Hill. No other holy place is as sacred as Govardhan Hill. (10.19-20)

*ṛṣabhādrau kūṭakādrau kolakādrau tathā naraḥ
suvārṇa-śrṅga-yuktānām gavāṁ koṭir dadāti yaḥ*

*mahā-puṇyaṁ labhet so ‘pi viprān sampūjya yatnataḥ
tasmāl lakṣa-guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girau govardhane dvija*

O *brāhmaṇa*, simply by visiting Govardhan Hill one attains piety a hundred thousand times greater than the piety he would attain if on the sacred mountains Rishabha, Kutaka, and Kolaka he had worshiped many *brāhmaṇas* and given in charity ten million cows with golden horns. (10.21-22)

*ṛṣyamūkasya sahyasya tathā deva-gireḥ punaḥ
yātrāyām labhate puṇyaṁ samastāya bhuvaḥ phalam*

*gīrājasya yātrāyām tasmāt koṭi-guṇaṁ phalam
gīrājā-samaṁ tīrthaṁ na bhūtaṁ na bhaviṣyati*

By going on pilgrimage to Govardhan Hill one attains piety ten million times greater than the piety he would attain by going on pilgrimage to Rishyamuka or Devagiri. There never was, nor will there ever be a holy place equal to Govardhan Hill. (10.23-24)

*śrī-saile daśa varṣāṇi kuṇḍe vidyādhare naraḥ
snānaṁ karoti sukr̥tī śata-yajña-phalaṁ labhet*

*govardhane puccha-kuṇḍe dinaikaṁ snāna-kṛn naraḥ
koṭi-yajña-phalaṁ sākṣāt puṇyam eti na saṁśayaḥ*

By bathing every day for ten years in Vidyadhara Kunda on Sri Saila one attains the result of a hundred *yajñas*. By once bathing in Puccha Kunda on Govardhan Hill one attains the result of ten million *yajñas*. Of this there is no doubt. (10.25-26)

*citrakūṭe payasvinyām śrī-rāma-navamī-dine
pariyātre tṛtīyāyām vaiśākhasya dvijottamaḥ*

*kukurādrau ca pūrṇāyām nilādrau dvādaśī-dine
indrakīle ca saptamyām snānaṁ dānaṁ tapaḥ kriyāḥ*

*tat sarvaṁ koṭi-guṇitaṁ bhavatītthaṁ hi bhārate
govardhane tu tat sarvaṁ anantaṁ jayate dvija*

O best of *brāhmaṇas*, bathing in sacred rivers, giving charity, performing austerities, and performing pious deeds, all these performed during *Rāma-navamī* on Mount Citrakut, during the third day of the month of *Viśākhā* on *pariyātra*, during the full-moon on Mount Kukurā, during *dvādaśī* on Mount Nila, or during *saptamī* at Indrakila bring a great pious result. That pious result is multiplied ten million times by visiting Bharata-varsha. It is multiplied unlimited times by visiting Govardhan Hill. (10.29-31)

*govinda-kuṇḍe viśade yaḥ snāti kṛṣṇa-mānasah
prāpnoti kṛṣṇa-sārūpyaṁ maithilendra na saṁśayaḥ*

One who, thinking of Lord Krishna, bathes in sacred Govinda-kund, attains a transcendental form like Lord Krishna’s. O lord of Mithila, of this there is no doubt. (10.39)

*aśvamedha-sahasrāṇi rājasūya-śatāni ca
mānasī-gaṅgayā tulyaṁ na bhavanty atra no girau*

Neither a thousand *aśvamedha-yajñas* nor a hundred *rājasūya-yajñas* are equal to visiting Manasi-ganga on Govardhan Hill. (10.40)

O *brāhmaṇa*, you have directly seen and touched Govardhan Hill. You have bathed in its sacred waters. In this world no one is more fortunate than you. If you don’t believe my words, consider the story of this great sinner who, because he was touched by a *govardhana-śilā*, attained a transcendental form like Lord Krishna’s.

When he heard the liberated soul’s words, the *brāhmaṇa* became struck with wonder.

Then he asked another question of the liberated soul, who knew the power and glory of Govardhan Hill. The *brāhmaṇa* said, “Who were you in your previous birth? What sin did you commit? O fortunate one, you have spiritual eyes to see all this directly.”

The liberated soul said, “In my previous birth I was a wealthy *vaiśya*’s son. From childhood I was a compulsive gambler. I became a great rake, a drunkard addicted to chasing prostitutes. O *brāhmaṇa*, my father, mother, and wife rebuked me again and again. Then one day, I killed my parents with poison and with a sword I killed my wife on a pathway. I took all their money and went with my prostitute beloved to the south, where I became a merciless thief. Later, I threw the prostitute into a blind well and left her there to die. With ropes I killed hundreds of people as I robbed them. O *brāhmaṇa*, I was so greedy after money that as a highwayman I murdered hundreds of *brāhmaṇas* and thousands of *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras*.

“One day, as I was hunting deer in the forest, I stepped on a snake. The snake bit me and I died. Fearsome Yamadutas beat me with terrible clubs, tied me up, and dragged me, a great sinner, to hell. I fell into the terrible hell named Kumbhipak and I stayed there for a *manvantara*. For a *kalpa* I was forced to embrace the red-hot iron statue of a woman. I suffered greatly. By

the desire of Yamaraj I was thrown into eight million four-hundred thousand different hells. Then my karma took me to Bharata-varsha. For ten births I was a pig, and for a hundred births I was a tiger. For a hundred births I was a camel. For another hundred births I was a buffalo. For a thousand births I was a snake. Wicked men killed me again and again. O *brāhmaṇa*, after ten thousand years of these births I was born in a desert as a grotesque and wicked monster.

“One day I assumed the form of a *śūdra* and I went to Vraja. I came near to Vrindavan and the sacred Yamuna. With sticks in their hands, some of Lord Krishna’s handsome friends beat me severely and I fled from the land of Vraja. Hungry for many days, I came here to eat you. Then you hit me with a stone from Govardhan Hill. Then, by Lord Krishna’s kindness, I became very fortunate.”

As the liberated soul was speaking these words, a chariot, splendid as a thousand suns and drawn by ten thousand horses, came from Goloka. The chariot rumbled with a thousand wheels. It was decorated with a hundred thousand associates of the Lord. It had a great network of bells and tinkling ornaments. It was extremely beautiful. The *brāhmaṇa* and the liberated soul bowed down before the chariot. Climbing the chariot, and at that moment losing all interest in his heart to stay in the material world, the liberated soul went to Sri Krishna’s beautiful abode, graceful with many pastime gardens, the highest of all spiritual realms.

Then the *brāhmaṇa* returned to Govardhan Hill, the deity worshiped by the kings of mountains. Circumambulating the hill, bowing down before it, and now aware of its great power and glory, the *brāhmaṇa* went to his home.

*yaḥ śṛṇoti girirāja-yasaśyam
gopa-rāja-nava-keli-rahasyam
deva-rāja iva so ’tra sameti
nanda-rāja iva śāntim amutra*

One who hears the glories of Govardhan Hill, glories that are filled with the secrets of Lord Krishna’s ever-new transcendental pastimes, will become as fortunate as King Indra in this life and as fortunate as King Nanda in the next. (11.26) ❀

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
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Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 115 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

12 November 2005 Śrī Utthānā Ekādaśī, 25 Dāmodara, 519 Gaurābda Circulation, 1552

Highlights

- VISION OF VRINDAVAN
A Remembrance of Srila Prabhupada
- BHUGARBHA GOSWAMI
Prema-vilāsa 7.220–32

VISION OF VRINDAVAN

A Remembrance of Srila Prabhupada

"But why is it, Srila Prabhupada, that here in Vrindavan, Krishna's devotees also seem to suffer so?" Gurudas asks.

"Suffer? What is that suffering?" Prabhupada says.

"Many don't have sufficient food. They sleep on the streets and ..."

"Who says there's not sufficient food? Is anyone starving? Just show me one starving man. In any temple a man can go and take *prasādam*. And as for sleeping, everyone is sleeping. When you sleep, do you know whether you're on a king's couch or a stone road? The Goswamis would sleep under a different tree every night, and then for only two or three hours. There's no problem eating, sleeping, defending, mating. There's no lack there, no poverty. The only poverty in India today is lack of Krishna consciousness — that's all."

"But most tourists are appalled when they come here and see the conditions," Dr. Kapoor says. He is dressed in a spotless white kurta and pajama pants. "It will take more than your temple at Raman Reti to change all that."

"Therefore I'm recommending a general program of clean-up, preservation, and restoration," Prabhupada says. "True, the beautiful temples of the Goswamis — Madana Mohana, Govindaji, especially — are crumbling due to neglect."

"Sometimes people even use them as stone quarries," Dr. Kapoor laments.

"So, we must first protect them. Then restore them to first-class condition, install deities, and conduct daily *āratis*. Then many people will come and benefit."

"Why has Krishna allowed His *dhāma* to deteriorate, Srila Prabhupada?" Gurudas asks.

"It has not deteriorated," he replies.

"Well, you just said that the Goswami temples were neglected."

"That's a fact. But Vrindavan has not deteriorated."

"Most Americans would be shocked to see what I saw this morning," I say.

"How's that?" Prabhupada asks.

"Well, for one, they'd consider it unhygienic."

"Just see. For a materialist, everything is topsy-turvy because his vision is perverted. Beauty and ugliness are in the eye of the seer."

"But what's this veneer covering the holy *dhāma*?"

"The ugliness that you see here is *yoga-māyā*," Prabhupada says. "It's Krishna's covering. Vrindavan appears this way to drive away the atheists and impersonalists, just as New York attracts them. For a devotee, this Vrindavan is as good as Krishna's transcendental abode in the spiritual sky — Goloka Vrindavan. But you must have the eyes to see."

"Transcendental vision," Dr. Kapoor says.

"Yes, Vrindavan hides herself from the materialist," Prabhupada says.

"You speak of Vrindavan as a person," I say.

"In spiritual consciousness, everything

is personal,” Prabhupada says. “Even the city of Ravana appeared before Hanuman as a gigantic Rakshashi, and Hanuman knocked her down because she challenged him.”

“Well, I’ve certainly noticed a difference between the consciousness of Delhi and here,” I say. “I couldn’t help but feel it. Still, the poverty ...”

“Krishna’s mercy keeps his devotees poor,” Prabhupada says. “Their only wealth is Krishna consciousness. Krishna doesn’t want them diverted by Maya Devi.”

“But I still don’t see how this is as good as Goloka Vrindavan,” I say.

“Then you must try to rediscover Vrindavan,” Prabhupada says. “That you must do. It is a question of consciousness. The real Vrindavan is there in your own heart, hiding herself from you.”

“So how do I go about it?” I ask.

“Just follow the examples of the elevated *vraja-vāsīs*,” he says, smiling. “For instance, the *gopīs*, the milkmaids of Vrindavan, simply tried to make Krishna happy. That is Krishna consciousness: making Krishna happy. When you love someone, you want to make him happy, right?”

“Right.”

“In Vrindavan, everyone is trying to please Krishna: the birds, trees, cows, the river, and all Krishna’s associates. It’s not that Vrindavan is only here. We can have Vrindavan everywhere. Krishna is not limited. We should not think that because Krishna is far away in Goloka Vrindavan he cannot accept what we offer him. If you offer food with love, Krishna eats. Krishna does not leave Goloka Vrindavan, but his expansion goes and accepts food. This Vrindavan that just happens to appear in India is as worshipable as Krishna. So we cannot offend his *dhāma*, his home. If we live in Vrindavan, we are living with Krishna, because Vrindavan is non-different from Krishna. There’s no difference between the original Vrindavan and this Vrindavan. Vrindavan is so powerful.”

— Pages 48-51. *Vrindavan Days*. By Howard Wheeler, (Hayagriva Swami). Palace Publishing. New Vrindavan, West Virginia. 1990.

BHUGARBHA GOSWAMI

Prema-vilāsa 7.220–32

*kibā gosvāmīra sneha! kahite ke pare?
śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya samarpilena savāre*

How great was Bhugarbha Goswami’s love! Who has the power to describe it? He surrendered everything to Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

— Srila Narahari Chakravarti’s *Bhakti-ratnākara* 6.396.

*kṛpāmaya bhugarbha gosvāmī kṛpā kari’
punaḥ ki āniba mo pāpīra keśa dhari’*

Will merciful Bhugarbha Goswami kindly grab sinful me by the hair and drag me back to Vraja?

— *Bhakti-ratnākara* 6.478.

*jaya raghunātha bhāṭṭa, sanātana, rūpa
jaya śrī bhūgarbha, lokanātha bhakti-bhūpa*

Glory to Raghunath Bhatta, Sanatan Goswami, and Rupa Goswami! Glory to Sri Bhugarbha and Lokanath, the great monarchs of *bhakti*!

— *Bhakti-ratnākara* 15.7

Gaudiya Vaishnava literature discusses very little about Srila Bhugarbha Goswami. It’s known that he was a close friend of Srila Lokanath Goswami and that they both lived in Vraja on the order of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Lokanath and Bhugarbha are said to have been so close that the two were actually one, only their bodies were different. In text 187 of Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā, Srila Kavi Karnapur describes, bhūgarbha-ṭhakkurasyāsīt pūrvākhyā prema-mañjarī — in kṛṣṇa-līlā, Bhugarbha Goswami was previously Sri Prema Manjari. Radha Krishna Das Goswami writes in Sādhana-dīpikā (8.214) that Lokanath Goswami was the son of Bhugarbha’s brother.

Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami writes (Cc. ādi 8.68) that Bhugarbha Goswami was a disciple of Gadadhar Pandit. The verse following that describes that among Bhugarbha Goswami’s disciples were Chaitanya Das, a priest of the Govinda deity, as well as Mukundananda Chakravarti and the great devotee Krishnadas. In ādi 12.82, Kaviraj Goswami says that Bhugarbha is the 12th branch of the tree of Gadadhar Pandit. As they were senior by age and experience to many of the vaiṣṇavas in Vrindavan, Bhugarbha and Lokanath Goswamis were regarded among the principal gosvāmīs of Vraja. Bhugarbha Goswami was an intimate associate of Rupa and Sanatan, and on the order of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu he moved to Vrindavan where he spent the rest of his life engaged in bhajan and revealing and excavating the places of Krishna’s pastimes.

The following story is from Prema-vilāsa by Nityananda Das, the disciple of Jahnavi Mata, the divine consort of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. Jahnavi related to Nityananda Das many stories from the lives of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his associates. On her order, he compiled those

stories into the book known as *Prema-vilāsa*. The following translation describes something of the activities of Srila Bhugarbha Goswami.

“Go to Vrindavan”

One day, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu called for Lokanath Goswami and instructed him, “Please go to Vrindavan to satisfy me. You should start at once and travel through Girikunda, Govardhan, Yavat, Barshana, and various solitary *kuñjas*, and be happy to live in those places. Go to your original home and worship the feet of Kishore Kishori. Build a cottage at Chira Ghat and at the Rasasthali [the place of the *rāsa* dance], which is surrounded by trees like Tamal, Bakul and Vata. Visit Vamsivat, Nidhuvan, and take rest in Dhir Samir. Bathe in the Yamuna and live on *ajācaka-bhikṣyā* — alms that come without asking. Continue your chanting and remembrance, and teach the living entities about Krishna. As an accomplished devotee, you will get numerous disciples. Rupa and others will join you later.”

When they met the following morning, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu again instructed Lokanath to go to Vrindavan, and embraced him lovingly. When Lokanath fell at his feet, Mahaprabhu placed his foot on his head. Holding Lokanath’s hands, the Lord began to cry. Mahaprabhu said, “I have given my own Vrindavan to you.” Lokanath also shed tears like torrents of rain. Only a loving master and his faithful servant can realize the meaning of this crying.

Gadadhar Pandit and his disciple Bhugarbha were also present at that time. Bhugarbha eagerly approached his guru and requested, “Please be kind and allow me to go to Vrindavan. This has been my long-cherished desire.” Hearing this, Mahaprabhu said, “Gadai, permit him to go with Lokanath.”

Gadadhar consented, saying, “Go happily with Lokanath and travel the whole way discussing *kṛṣṇa-līlā*.” The devotees joyfully shouted out the names of Hari, as Lokanath and Bhugarbha bowed at the feet of Mahaprabhu and Gadadhar Pandit. Although the Lord had given the order, when Lokanath left for Vrindavan, Mahaprabhu began to cry helplessly and Gadadhar Pandit cried for his Bhugarbha.

Lokanath and Bhugarbha traveled happily, deeply absorbed in thoughts of Gauranga. Sometimes they fell to the ground in ecstatic love,

sometimes they loudly sang the glories of Krishna, and other times they sang the glories of Gauranga. In this way they gradually reached the town of Rajmahala. At this point they were uncertain which way to go. They inquired from some passersby, who advised that they not go to Vrindavan as the roads leading there were filled with notorious dacoits. Worried that they would never reach Vrindavan, they decided to go in the direction of Tajpura. Eventually they arrived at the village of Puraria, and shortly thereafter reached Ayodhya. Although the journey had gone well so far, they were frightened that they would not be able to fulfill the Lord’s order to go to Vrindavan. Nevertheless, they continued. Eventually they arrived in Lucknow, and on the twenty-third day they reached Agra. There they took bath in the Yamuna and accepted some *prasādam*. Two days later they entered Gokul and visited the birthplace of Krishna. Finally, on the following day, they reached Vrindavan.

Now I shall explain something wonderful. Gadadhar Pandit Goswami, the favorite follower of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, was the incarnation of Srimati Radharani. In his previous life Bhugarbha Mahasaya was Nandimukhi [see above for Kavi Karnapur’s description of Bhugarbha Goswami’s identity in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*]. Nandimukhi is close friends with Manjulali [Lokanath’s identity in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*]. Again Kavi Karnapur gives a different description. In *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 187, He says that Lokanath is the incarnation of Lila Manjari]. Chaitanya-chandra, the only master of the universe and the wish-fulfilling tree of all His devotees, understood this very well.

Lokanath and Bhugarbha traveled throughout the abode of Vraja, sometimes rolling on the ground in ecstasy. They observed the beauty of Govardhan and from there went to Yavat, the abode of Sri Radhika, and visited all the places where the *sakhīs* used to perform their pastimes. From there they went to the house of Nanda Maharaja, and then to Sanket Kunj. There, Lokanath took the hands of Bhugarbha and asked him to describe the *līlās* which had taken place there. Relishing the pastimes of the Lord, they both began to cry out the name of Radha, oblivious to everything else. Thus they decided to halt there for a day. The local residents received them warmly and brought them delicious foodstuffs.

The next day was spent absorbed in ecstatic love on the hill of Barshana. In the morning

they took their baths in the lake and then circumambulated Barshana. They decided to stay there that day and were served with great care by the local residents. Next, they visited Kali Ghat, Nidhuvan, and Rasasthali. When they arrived at Chira Ghat they were overwhelmed by the beauty of the forest. They began to search for a proper place there to build a hut, and at last found an appropriate tree.

After settling in, Lokanath told Bhugarbha, "I am certain that there is no hope of ever seeing Chaitanya Mahaprabhu again. Prabhu has sent us here, depriving us of the opportunity to observe his pastimes with his devotees." In lamentation he called out, "Oh my Lord! When will I have the fortune of seeing the lotus feet of Rupa and Sanatan?" Both of them began to wait eagerly for the moment when they would meet the two brothers.

Word quickly spread throughout Vraja about the arrival of two *brāhmaṇas*. Struck by the beauty and disposition of Lokanath and Bhugarbha, the residents did not regard them as ordinary men. The *vraja-vāsīs* commented that these two *brahmacārīs* were extremely polished and polite. Equal to all persons, they advised everyone to worship Krishna with devotion. When Lokanath and Bhugarbha went to Dhira Samir Ghat and the people saw the sacred threads on

their shoulders and the bodily beauty of the two *brahmacārīs*, which was equal to that of Cupid, they thought, "We have never seen anyone like this. Are they demigods or Gandharvas?" Thus their glories spread far and wide, and people, even from distant places, brought different varieties of *prasādam* for the two friends. In this way they became the life of the residents of Vraja. Completely indifferent to the material world, Lokanath and Bhugarbha lived a secluded life in Sri Vrindavan Dham.

I am incapable of completely describing the glories of Lokanath and Bhugarbha. I am simply trying to execute the order of Sri Jahnava and Birachandra. When Jahnava went to Vrindavan, I accompanied her, along with my brother Ramachandra Das and other *vaiṣṇavas*. Thus I had the opportunity to witness many pastimes with my own eyes. There Isvari met Sri Rupa and other Goswamis. Keeping faith in the lotus feet of Sri Jahnava and Birachandra, I, Nityananda Das, write *Prema-vilāsa*.

• • •
In Vaishnava Digdarsini, Murarilala Adhikari estimates that Bhugarbha and Lokanath Goswami's left for Vrindavan in 1509 AD and arrived there in 1510. Bhugarbha Goswami's disappearance is on the 14th day of the bright part of the month of Kārtika. His samādhi is in Vrindavan in the courtyard of the Radha Damodar temple, near to Rupa Goswami's.

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015
Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026
Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 116 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

27 November 2005

Śrī Utpannā Ekādaśī, 12 Keśava, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation, 1642

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THE RIVER OF NECTAR

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



In the fourth canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, twenty-ninth chapter, verse 40, the importance of hearing the pastimes of the Lord is stated by Sukadev Goswami to Maharaja Parikshit: "My dear King, one should stay at

a place where the great *ācāryas* [holy teachers] speak about the transcendental activities of the Lord, and one should give aural reception to the nectarean river flowing from the moonlike faces of such great personalities. If someone eagerly continues to hear such transcendental sounds, then certainly he will become freed from all material hunger, thirst, fear and lamentation, as well as all illusions of material existence."

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu also recommended this process of hearing as a means of self-realization in the present age of Kali. In this age it is very difficult to follow thoroughly the regulative principles and studies of the Vedas which were formerly recommended. However, if one gives aural reception to the sound vibrated by great devotees and *ācāryas*, that alone will give him relief from all material contamination. Therefore it is the recommendation of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu that one should simply hear from authorities that are actually devotees of the Lord. Hearing from professional men will not help. If we hear from those who are actually

[next column](#)

self-realized, then the nectarean rivers, like those that are flowing on the moon planet, will flow into our ears.

— The Nectar of Devotion, Chapter 10.

LEVELS OF GURUS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: It is said that guru is one. How do we understand that in the presence of different bona-fide spiritual masters? Is there any specific distinction?

Gour Govinda Swami: Is the Lord one or many? *advaya-tattvam ekam eva dvitīya nāsti* — The absolute is one, not many. But those who do not know this *tattva* say, "Oh, there are many gods. Rama is a god, Nrisimha is a god, Vamana is a god, Matsya is a god." They are confused. But if one understands in *tattva*, then there is no confusion. As the Lord is one, so also the guru is one in *tattva*, but there are different manifestations. A conditioned soul cannot understand this. By the mercy of the guru one receives this *tattva-jñāna*.

Devotee: So there are different varieties of gurus?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes.

Devotee: Can we say that among them there are different levels of advancement—*madhyama-adhikāra*, *kaniṣṭha-adhikāra*?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, different levels of advancement are there. As one deserves, one gets. As an example, a shopkeeper may have varieties of commodities, first class, second class, and third class. Different customers want different qualities of commodities. The

shopkeeper wants to dispose of his goods, so he shows you a third-class item and tells you it is first-class. In this way he tests to see whether you want third class or first class, and how much you can afford.

If, after seeing his goods, you say, “No, I don’t appreciate this. Do you have anything better?” Then the shopkeeper replies, “Better things are there, but the price is more—fifty dollars.” If you can afford it, you say, “All right, show me.” Then he will show you something superior.

And then if you again say, “No, no. I want something better.”

“I have something better than this, but the price is one hundred dollars.”

If you are prepared to spend the money, you will say, “Yes, I want that thing.” Then he shows you the best quality. So varieties are there, it is up to you to decide what you want.

Devotee: Where do we get the money to make our purchase?

Gour Govinda Swami: You have to earn the money, otherwise how can you purchase the commodity? It is up to you what variety you want. One who is really crying thinks, “I want the best. I don’t want second class or third class. I want the topmost.” Krishna knows your heart, so he makes an arrangement. It is up to you. What you desire, you get. Krishna knows what you deserve and he makes an appropriate arrangement for you. If Krishna sees, “This fellow is not serious. He is just speaking externally. He is not crying in his heart. He wants to be cheated.” Then Krishna tells *māyā* to make an arrangement and you are cheated. As you deserve, you get.

Hypocrities and Pretenders

Devotee: Prabhupada used to give the example that sometimes persons posing as *sādhus* go to holy places, and also some frivolous women go just to capture a *sādhū* so that they can have a son. However, the person who is posing as a *sādhū* is not really a *sādhū*.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, he is a hypocrite, a pretender. There are many pretenders and many hypocrites. But a real *sādhū* is very rare. Still, genuine *sādhus* are there. If there were no sun and moon how would this cosmic manifestation go on? Similarly, if there were no *sādhus* how would Krishna’s *saṁsāra*, Krishna’s *līlā*, go on? Because we are conditioned souls, our vision is defective. Even though a *sādhū* may

come before us, we cannot see him. Therefore, one should not say that there are no *sādhus*. Instead, one should say, “I am a blind person. I cannot see a *sādhū*.” Then one will be very eager to acquire such vision.

Only by the help of the sunshine can you see the sun. Similarly, only by the mercy of Krishna can you see him or understand him. That mercy is received through a pure *sādhū*. Only by the mercy of a *sādhū* can you see or understand Krishna. You cannot understand Krishna through your intelligence or merit. You cannot see him by your vision. You are not the seer. Krishna is the seer. *Sādhū* is the seer. You are to be seen. You think it is just the opposite, so you are cheated. You have no vision, how can you see? This is our *vaiṣṇava* philosophy. This is Mahāprabhu’s teaching. We are very proud of our senses. We want to see. We want to perceive through our senses, but they are defective. The only thing required is to cry before Krishna from the core of the heart. Then Krishna makes a perfect arrangement. Those who have cried, they have gotten. Those who have not cried, they have not gotten. You have to cry, then you’ll meet guru. By guru’s mercy, you’ll get Krishna. *Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā* and *guru-kṛpā* are interrelated. In Mahāprabhu’s teachings to Rupa Goswami in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* he has said, *guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja* — by the mercy of guru and Krishna one receives the seed of the devotional creeper. First comes *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā* by which you meet guru, and then, by the mercy of guru, you get Krishna. That is our process.

Mercy and Cheating

Devotee: I have heard that the disciple has to be very serious.

Gour Govinda Swami: If one is not serious one cannot get anything. You should understand that the *sādhū* has two things: *kṛpā* and *vañcanā*. *Vañcanā* means cheating. One who deserves *kṛpā*, mercy, gets it. One who deserves cheating, he is cheated. The example is Pundarik Vidyanidhi. Pundarik Vidyanidhi was a very elevated devotee, a *mahā-bhāgavata*. However, if anyone would see him they would think he was a *bhogī*, an enjoyer. He would wear costly garments and keep valuable rings on all ten fingers. He would sit on an opulent cushion and chew *pan*, spitting in a precious pot made of gold and *aṣṭadhātu*. How is he a *mahā-bhāgavata*? Externally he seemed to be a *bhogī*. But what was inside no

one could understand. Only one who has vision can understand and see his real form. Those who only see what is on the outside are cheated. Many people are not serious to see the real thing. They only want external things. They want to be cheated, so that's what they get.

Once, Mukunda told Gadadhar Pandit, "Let us go and take association of Pundarik Vidyanidhi. He is a *mahā-bhāgavata*." When Gadadhar Pandit arrived there he only saw these outward things, and in his mind he thought, "What has Mukunda told me? He is a *mahā-bhāgavata*? He is a *bhogī*!" Mukunda could understand what Gadadhar was thinking, so he immediately recited a verse from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (3.2.23):

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī
lebhe gatiṁ dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyam
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇam vrajema*

Bakī means Putana, the sister of Bakasura. To kill baby Krishna she smeared a very dreadful poison on her breast. She then allowed Krishna to suck her breast. But what did Krishna do? Krishna sucked her breast, and along with it he sucked out her life air. She died, but as she had done the work of a mother, Krishna gave her the position of mother. Therefore this verse is saying, "Is there anyone to take shelter of who is more merciful than Krishna?"

As soon as Mukunda spoke this verse, Pundarik Vidyanidhi became ecstatic. He rolled on the ground and tears came from his eyes. All of the *aṣṭa sāttvikā bhāva* symptoms were manifest in him. He tore his opulent cushion, smashed his spitting pot, and rolled on the ground crying.

Gadadhar Pandit thought, "Oh, he is a genuine *mahā-bhāgavata*. I have committed a great offense thinking him to be a *bhogī*. Unless he punishes me, how will I be free of the reactions to this offense? I must become his disciple. Then he will catch hold of my ear and slap me. He will inflict discipline on me, and in that way I'll be freed from my reaction." Therefore Gadadhar Pandit took mantra from Pundarik Vidyanidhi and became his disciple.

So Pundarik Vidyanidhi's external appearance was cheating, but his inner nature was different. Who could see it? Therefore, *sādhū* has two things, *kṛpā* and *vañcanā*—mercy and cheating. If someone only wants external things, he is cheated. And if he wants inner things, he gets

mercy, *kṛpā*. Therefore, I say you deserve what you get. Krishna knows what you want and what you deserve. A suitable arrangement will be made for you. Although there are many thousands of Prabhupada disciples, how many have gotten real mercy? One says, "Don't you know who I am? I am a Prabhupada disciple!" In actuality, he is suffering and suffering. Now he has become a *karmī* and is gliding down to hell. Why is this? If you are not serious you cannot receive mercy. You are such a rascal! He gave you mercy, but you cannot receive it. You are so unfortunate. Sometimes I become amazed! How is it that these Prabhupada disciples cannot understand this point? If you are serious, if you are hankering and crying in your heart, then mercy and help is always there. It is hanging like a rope in front of you — you just have to grab it. However, you are careless, you are not serious. Therefore, although it is hanging right in front of you, still you cannot have it.

Devotee: Srila Prabhupada gave the example of how a doctor can recognize another doctor, a businessman another businessman.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, because they have the vision. If you have no vision you'll only misunderstand, and misunderstanding is poison. This is going on. ❧

— Excerpted from chapter seven of *The Process of Inquiry*.
Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India. 1998.

THE FALSE SANNYASI

Rev. A. G. Atkins

Mr. A. G. Atkins was a Britisher and a Christian missionary who first came to India sometime before 1916. In order to meet the language study requirements of a missionary he began to read the Hindi version of Ramayana composed by the poet Tulsidas. He quickly became attracted to the story and devotional spirit of the story of Lord Rama and began a careful study of the book that continued for over twenty years. In 1941, on the suggestion of a friend, he began to translate it into English verse. He spent 12 years working on his poetic translation and finally saw the book published by the Hindustan Times in June of 1953. The following is an excerpt from book III, chapter 13.

Now, when Ravan saw that his way had been cleared,

He in hermit's guise there before Sita appeared;

He who kept gods and demons
in such total fright,

That they ate not by day and
could not sleep at night,

Himself now afraid, like a dog
that is seeking

To steal, looking all ways, came
furtively sneaking;

His feet set in evil ways,
counting no cost,

Ev'ry trace of strength, wisdom
and glory now lost,

He told stories to Sita of
customs and laws,

Giving kindly ways,
threat'nings and love as his
cause;

She replied, "Tho' in guise of
the saintly you speak,

"Full of evil and wrong are the
things that you seek."

Then his true name and form
demon Ravan displayed;

Sita, seeing and hearing, was
deathly afraid;



Ravana came before Sita in the guise of a sannyāsi

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:
Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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She replied, as she rallied her
courage and will,

"Wretch! My husband is coming! Stand
off and stand still!

"You are doomed, demon ruler; you're
now well-nigh dead,

"Like a rabbit that would with a lioness
wed."

At these words shame and wrath moved
him more than before,

At heart feeling, "Here's one to enjoy and
adore!"

Then he seized Sita roughly and angrily,
and in

His chariot waiting there placed her;

Altho' from his trembling he scarcely
could drive,

Thro' the air to his dwelling he raced her. ❧

— Pages 885-6. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 117 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

11 December 2005 Śrī Mokṣadā Ekādaśī, 26 Keśava, 519 Gaurābda

Circulation 1,648

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THE ART OF MANAGEMENT

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



The regulative principles must be followed by everyone. Otherwise their enthusiasm dwindles and they again think of sex and become restless, and so many problems are there. This is a symptom of missing the point. The point is to be engaged in doing something for Krishna, never mind what that job is. One should be engaged in doing something satisfying to a devotee so that he remains always enthusiastic. He will automatically follow the regulative principles because they are part of his occupational duty. By applying them practically as his occupational duty, he realizes the happy result of the regulative principles. The future of this Krishna Consciousness movement is very bright, so long as the managers remain vigilant that 16 rounds are being chanted by everyone without fail, that they are all rising before four in the morning and attending *maṅgala-ārati*. Our leaders shall be careful not to kill the spirit of enthusiastic service, which is individual, spontaneous and voluntary. They should always try to generate an atmosphere of fresh challenge to the devotees, so that they will

[next column](#) ➤

agree enthusiastically to rise and meet it. That is the art of management: to draw out spontaneous loving spirit for sacrificing some energy for Krishna. But where are such expert managers? All of us should become expert managers and preachers. We should not be after comforts and become complacent or self-content. There must be always some *tapasya* — strictly observing the regulative principles. The Krishna consciousness movement must always be a challenge, a great achievement to be gained by the voluntary desire to do it — that will keep it healthy. So you big managers now try to train up more and more competent preachers and managers like yourselves. Forget this centralizing and bureaucracy. ❀

— Letter to Karandhara, 22 December 1972.

WE RECEIVE ACCORDING TO WHAT WE GIVE

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

Question: Who will be delivered from this material world?

Srila Prabhupada: If one gives one hundred percent then the Lord will definitely deliver him. If the association of the *sādhus* and guru, service to the *sādhus* and guru, does not become an integral part of our life, then this desire to give

one hundred percent does not arise within us. On the other hand, it is not possible to attain the Lord who is complete unless one completely dedicates himself. God is complete and perfect. He wants what is complete and perfect — complete love, complete surrender. The complete can be attained only by giving completely. One receives according to what one gives. ❀

— Excerpted from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

THE KIRTANA OF

SRILA NAROTTAM DAS THAKUR

Srila Narahari Chakravarti's Bhakti-ratnākara

At the famous festival at Kheturi-gram, after the installation of the deities, Sri Jahnava Thakurani, the divine consort of Lord Nityananda Prabhu, empowered Narottam Das Thakur to do kīrtana. This excerpt is from chapter ten, verses 522 to 632.

Sri Jahnava Iswari stared continuously at Narottam, infusing him with spiritual power beyond the comprehension of common men. Sri Achyutananda, the son of Adwaita Acharya Prabhu, blessed Thakur Narottam, and the *mahāntas* gave him their permission to begin the *sankīrtana*. The companions of Narottam were all expert in singing, dancing and musical instruments.

Devidas, who sat on the left side of Narottam, started by stroking the sweet *mṛdaṅga*. The other musical instruments joined in, each one seeming to speak in sweet words full of *prema*. Narottam led the *kīrtana* and Sri Vallabha Das and others repeated each line in turn. Sri Gauranga Das and others played other instruments and sang in a pitch. There are two methods of *kīrtana*: *anibadha*, unbinding, and *nibadha*, binding. Sri Gokul sang the first method and his sweet voice impressed everyone. The audience was mesmerized by the musicians and their dramatic performance.

Surrounded by his musicians, Narottam looked like the moon surrounded by stars. During the *kīrtana*, Narottam and the other singers absorbed themselves in thoughts of Chaitanya, Nityananda and Adwaita, dedicating themselves to the mercy of those Lords. By their tuning, volume, scale, and modulation, the *rāgas* and *rāgiṇīs* they sang seemed to take life. The depth of their singing increased the tempo of the instrumentalists, and as the volume of the song increased so also the pleasure of the

vaiṣṇavas increased. Khandavasi Sri Raghunandan offered sandal paste and flower garlands to the *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*, the personal instruments of Mahaprabhu, and then embraced Narottam and the other singers in a wave of emotion. He garlanded Narottam and each singer and they in turn bowed to him.

Thereafter Narottam changed to the *nibadha* style of *kīrtana*, which explained the mental condition of Nadia Chandra (Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the moon of Nadia), observed in the mood of Sri Radhika. The singers became emotional during their performance and this heightened the ecstasy of the audience. Sri Jahnava Iswari cried when she listened to the song describing the qualities of Sri Gaurasundar. Sri Achyutananda, Sripati, Srinidhi and others lost control of their emotions and shivered in ecstasy.

People discussed the *kīrtana* recital of Narottam in various ways. One person appreciated the way Narottam expressed the inner meaning of each song. Another person appreciated the overall masterful presentation. One person said that Narottam had attempted to duplicate the method of *kīrtana* enjoyed by Mahaprabhu at the house of Svarupa Damodar in order to attract Mahaprabhu himself to the *kīrtana*. Another man agreed that Mahaprabhu must be enjoying the *kīrtana* with his beloved companions. One devotee expressed his inner desire to see the Lord and his companions manifest within the *sankīrtana*. They all appreciated the quality of the *kīrtana* with its fine tuning, meaning, and rhythm, saying that the Gandharvas and Kinnaras should be ashamed of their songs.

During the *kīrtana* recital, demigods from heaven poured flowers on the singers. Narada and other famous saints and ascetics came in disguise from heaven to attend the *kīrtana*. Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma were also fully absorbed in that *kīrtana*. Even the animals, birds, snakes and other creatures were mesmerized by the songs. Little by little, as the ocean of *sankīrtana* overflowed its banks, the people in the *sankīrtana* pavilion forgot their own existence and bathed in the tears from their eyes.

The Manifestation of Mahaprabhu

While listening to the *sankīrtana*, Lord Gaura Rai decided to reveal himself in that place. Within that pavilion, Chaitanya, Nityananda, Sri Adwaita and other companions suddenly manifest themselves, like lightning in a cloud.

Charming the universe with their appearance, they became the precious jewels of the *sankīrtana*. This pastime of Mahāprabhu enjoying and participating in *sankīrtana* was beyond the comprehension of even Lord Brahma and other demigods. The audience was enchanted by the beautiful dresses and graceful gestures of those divine beings. In the midst of the *sankīrtana* they danced gracefully in time with the increasing beat of the musical instruments. Mahāprabhu's indescribable dance in that *kīrtana* seemed to shower love throughout the world. Sri Nityananda's dance caused the world to tremble, while Sri Adwaita Chandra danced like a mad lion and roared in joy. Pandit Gadadhar danced ecstatically with Srinivas. The joyful dancing of Srivasa Pandit, Murari Gupta, Vakreswar, Haridas Thakur, Svarup Goswami, Das Gadadhar, Rai Ramananda, Vasudev Sarvabhauma and Vidya Vachaspati lifted the people out of their sorrows and miseries. Achyutananda danced with tears of joy flowing from his eyes, while the dancing of Mukunda, Sri Narahari, Sri Raghunandan, Gauri Das Pandit, Sripati, Sri Nidhi, Govinda, Madhava and Basu Ghosh enchanted the world. Hundreds and thousand of people participated in that dance, including Mukunda, Sri Acharya Purandara, Vasudeva Dutta, Brahmachari Suklambara, Sriman Pandit, Yadu, Sri Mukunda Dutta, Sri Madhusudan, Sri Nath, Mahesh, Sridhar, Shankar, Jagadish, Sri Yadunandan, Kasishwar, Sri Raghunath Bhatta, Rupa, Sanatan, Sri Nakul Brahmachari, Dhanajaya, Vipra Vaninath, Sikhi, Kanai, Vijay, Suryadas, Sri Nrisimha, Hridaya Chaitanya, Syamananda, Srinivas, Sri Narottam and others. Even the demigods and Gandharvas danced with them.

Gauracandra loves his disciples, and thus he fulfilled the desires of Srinivas and Narottam by appearing before them during the *sankīrtana*. When he embraced Srinivas and Narottam he softly told them something confidential that others could not hear. Then Mahāprabhu and his companions disappeared, leaving his disciples in utter despair. Their pitiful lamentation broke the hearts of all who witnessed the scene.

The sudden appearance and disappearance of Mahāprabhu within that *sankīrtana* created a sense of despair amongst all the devotees present. They became struck by the reality of their miserable lives and began to lament piteously.

keha kahe, — “kothā gela prabhu gauracandra?”

keha kahe, — “kothā śrī advaita nityānanda?”

keha kahe, — “kothā śrī paṇḍita gadādhara?”

keha kahe, — “kothā haridāsa, vakreśvara?”

keha kahe, — “kothā gelā śrīvāsa, murāri?”

keha kahe, — “kothā śrī mukunda, narahari?”

keha kahe, — “kothā gaurīdāsa, gadādhara?”

keha kahe, — “kothā śrī svarūpa-dāmodara?”

keha kahe, — “gaṇasaha prabhu dekhā diyā

kothā gelā” — bali' kānde bhūme loṭāiyā

“They said, where has Prabhu Gaurachandra gone? Where is Adwaita, where is Nityananda? Where is Sri Pandit Gadadhar? Where is Haridas and Vakreshwar? Where is Srivasa and Murari, Sri Mukunda and Narahari? Where have Gauridas and Gadadhar gone? Where is Sri Svarupa Damodar?” Rolling on the ground and crying loudly, they said, “When will we again see the associates of Mahāprabhu?”

Tears flowed so profusely that the ground became muddy. Even the atheists who had come to the *sankīrtana* only to make fun of the devotees also began to cry. Lifting their hands high in the air, they prayed to Mahāprabhu to protect them from sin and misery.

When Sripati, Srinivas and others regained their external senses they could not believe that they had actually had the association of the Lord. The people in the audience were also amazed by the vision they had seen. Srinivas and Narottam explained to them that they had been witness to another *līlā* of Mahāprabhu, and that the Lord's pastimes are always beyond the comprehension of the laymen. Sri Jahnava Iswari confirmed this by saying that Mahāprabhu had fulfilled the great desires of his beloved devotees by personally appearing during their *sankīrtana*. By this appearance, Mahāprabhu had delivered many heretics from sin and damnation and lifted mankind out of its ocean of sorrow. ❀

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O MIND, JUST STAY IN VRINDAVAN!

Bhakta Kavi Gopal Krishna

Gopal Krishna Pattanaik (1784-1862) of Paralakhemundi, southern Orissa, wrote hundreds of devotional poems about Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and Radha Krishna. His poetry is a common feature of Orissan cultural life, and Odissi

dance performances are often based on his devotional poems. He was initiated in the line of Shyamananda Prabhu.

This poem is one of his many “instructions to the mind” — *manaḥ śikṣa*, a common poetic form in Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. Because the audience may not be willing to accept direct instructions, the poet presents the message in a more easily digestible form — as an instruction to his own mind.

(śaṅkarābharāṇa rāga; rupaka tāla)

vrajaṇanaku mana jā chālire
jaya rādhe kṛṣṇa boli-re (chorus)

O mind! Go to the forest of Vraja, singing,
“All glories to Radha-Krishna!”

bhāla nā ethire kichi nāhiñ sukha
murukha sabuṭi duḥkha-re
nibhṛta-kuñjare bije karichanti
rahi dekha candra mukha-re

O foolish mind, don’t have any misgivings, for there is no happiness here. This world is only distress. Stay in Vrindavan and gaze at the moonlike faces of Sri Sri Radha Krishna, who are staying in a solitary grove.

cinmaya cidghana rasamaya kṛṣṇa
ānandarūpīnī rādhā
sakhī mañjarīnka saṅgate rahibu
nāśibe sakala bādhā-re

Sri Krishna is divine consciousness (*cinmaya*), and concentrated bliss (*cidghana*), and is full of transcendental mellows (*rasamaya*). Srimati Radharani is the embodiment of divine pleasure. Stay with the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*. In their association, all obstacles will be destroyed.

niśāntaru rāsā- basāna paryante
sevāre thibu santata-re
niṣkāma hoiṇa sādhu-jane puṇa
rahiṇa bhāla tu anta-re

From morning to night always engage in devotional service. Becoming free from all other desires, in your heart always remember and think of *sādhus*.

śrī guru datta bīja-mantra ādhāra
kariṇa hṛdare rakha-re
gopāla-kṛṣṇa bhāṣa-i se yugala
rasaku bhāvi tu sukha-re

Keep the *bija-mantra* given to you by Sri Guru in your heart as protection; Gopal Krishna says, “O my mind, become happy by thinking of the mellow of the divine couple. ॐ

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THE NECTAR PASTIMES OF LORD GOVINDA

Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami's
Govinda Lilāmṛta 5.1

yat pītaṁ śruti-vāñ-manobhir anīṣaṁ tṛṣṇā-pradam adbhutam
saṁsārāmaya-hāry api prañayajonmādāndhya-mohādi-kṛt
śaśvac carovitam apy analpa-rasadam dehādi-hṛt-puṣṭidam
taj jīyād amṛta-sprhā-haram idam govinda-lilāmṛtam

The immortal nectar pastimes of Lord Govinda are most captivating. If one constantly drinks this wonderful nectar with his ears, words, and mind, his fascination for it will increase more and more. Tasting this nectar again and again nourishes the body and heart and cures the disease known as material life. This elixir of immortality makes the reader bewildered, blind, and mad with ecstatic love for Krishna. ॐ

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue No. 118 Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

27 December 2005 Śrī Saphalā Ekādaśī, 12 Nārāyaṇa, 519 Gaurābda Circulation 1,652

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Nārada Purāṇa 1.1. 73-74

“IN MY ABSENCE”

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The spiritual master is present wherever his sincere disciple is trying to serve his instructions. This is possible by the mercy of Krishna. In your attempts to serve me and in all your sincere devotional sentiments I am with you as my Guru Maharaja is with me. Remember this always. (Letter to Bhakta Don, 1 December 1973)

So now I am depending on you all to carry on this great mission in my absence; chant and hear, and Krishna will bless you. (Letter to “Children at New York”, 26 July 1967)

Please always try to remember me by my teachings and we shall always be together. Just like I have written in the first publications of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, “The spiritual master lives forever by his divine instruction and the disciple lives with him,” because I have always served my Guru Maharaja and followed his teachings I am even now never separated from him. Sometimes

māyā may come and try to interfere, but we must not falter. We must always follow the path laid down by the great *ācāryas*, and in the end you will see. (Letter to Cidananda, 25 November 1973)

If you think of me and work for me, then I am in your heart. If you love somebody he is in your heart. It is a common thing. Everyone understands it. (Letter to Jadurani, 4 September 1972) ❀

UNAUTHORIZED INSTRUCTORS

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Bhaktivinoda-vāṇī-vaibhava is a collection of the teachings of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode compiled by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode, a prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, and published in 1938. The book is in the form of a series of questions composed by the compiler, with answers extracted from Thakur Bhaktivinode’s teachings. The following are some extracts from chapter 6.

What is the behavior and opinion of learned godless instructors of fruitive activities?

They will say to themselves:

“O my brother, don’t stay away from sense pleasures. Enjoy sense pleasures as you like,

as long as others do not know of them. Why not? I do not think the world will collapse because of them. There is no God, an all-seeing God who gives to us the results of our actions. What have you to fear? Just be a little careful, so no one will know. If they learn of it, then you will lose your good reputation, and perhaps the government or bad people will make trouble for you. If that happens, neither you nor others will be happy.”

Know for certain that if the hearts of the preachers of atheistic morality were examined, these thoughts would be found. (*Tattva-viveka* 1.9-12 commentary)

Is it proper for a bona fide spiritual master to give *hari-nāma* or *mantra* initiation to a faithless person?

One who gives *hari-nāma* to a faithless person with a desire to receive some *dakṣiṇā* is a seller or trader of *hari-nāma*. By exchanging an invaluable jewel for an insignificant object, a person falls down from the spiritual life of worshiping Hari. (*Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*)

Can an imposter become a spiritual master?

O my mind! Your definition of a saintly person is he who is expert in juggling words, and you become fully influenced by his association. If you see a cruel person, you show respect to him and fall down at his feet with devotion. (*Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* song 16)

Can a *sannyāsī* who has given up the shelter of his spiritual master become an *ācārya*?

Even though Ramachandra Puri was a disciple of Madhavendra Puri, he accepted polluted conclusions from the society of dry speculators and preached irreligious principles. As a result, Madhavendra Puri Goswami rejected him and considered him an offender. Then, Ramachandra Puri blasphemed and found fault with others. He gave instructions on dry knowledge and thus became neglected by the *vaiṣṇavas*. (*Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya* commentary on Cc. *antya*, chapter 8)

Are the conclusions of a bona fide *ācārya* and an unauthorized *ācārya* the same?

After carefully discussing the *Vedas* and the *Vedānta-sūtras*, the *ācāryas* have drawn two kinds of conclusions. Srimat Sankaracharya preached the philosophy of monism based on the conclusions put forth by the sages like Dattatreya, Ashtavakra, and Durvasa. This

is one kind of conclusion. The *vaiṣṇava ācāryas* preach the science of pure devotional service based on the conclusion put forth by the great souls like Narada, Prahlad, Dhruva, and Manu. This is the other kind of conclusion. (*Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā*, Chapter 9) ❀

— Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāñī Vaibhava. Translated by Sri Bhumipati Das, Published by Sri Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

SADHU-SANGA AND KRISHNA-NAMA Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Sri Gaurasundara teaches the all-sufficiency of the *kīrtana* of the name of Krishna. The ritual is the simplest possible. The only condition is that the name has to be chanted in the company of a saint. If there is no saint there is no name, as the name only makes his appearance on the lips of his bona-fide devotees.” ❀

— *Harmonist*, January 1932

“IF KRISHNA IS SATISFIED”

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Part One

Once the various parts of the body got together and complained about the stomach: “We are always serving him, but he is just sitting idly and eating. From today we will stop supplying food to the stomach.” In other words, they stopped cooperation with the stomach. What happened? If one stops giving food to the stomach, can they be active? Can they walk? No, they will become weaker and weaker and weaker. And that happened. Day after day the legs become weak, the hands become weak, all of the limbs of the body became weak. They couldn’t work. The hands couldn’t work, the legs couldn’t move, the ears couldn’t hear well, the eye couldn’t see well. Then they could understand, “Oh, we had a misconception. Although apparently the stomach seems to be always sitting idly, not doing anything, he is actually doing a great deal of work. He supplies strength to us. So we should cooperate with the stomach.” By practical experience they learned this lesson. This is a question of cooperation.

Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna is the source of everything

— *aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ* [Bg. 10.8]. He says, “I am the only enjoyer, the master of all sacrifice.” If you can give pleasure to Krishna then automatically everyone will get pleasure. If Krishna is satisfied then automatically everyone will be satisfied, because Krishna is the root of the tree. *Bhāgavatam* (4.31.14) says:

*yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyānām
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā*

As pouring water on the root of a tree energizes the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality.

If the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna or Vishnu is worshiped and satisfied, then automatically everyone will be worshiped and everyone will be satisfied. We find that when we try to satisfy one and all we fail. Even though we try our best, we cannot satisfy them. A householder tries his best to satisfy his wife, children, and family members, but still he is not successful. There is always dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction. Those who are *grhasthas* know this. They have practical experience. It is a very difficult matter to satisfy a woman. Even if you make a golden cage or a golden garment for her, still by nature she will not be satisfied.

The *Mahābhārata* tells a story about the five Pandava brothers, Yudhisthir, Bhima, Nakul, Arjun, Sahadev, and their wife Draupadi. They were banished to live in the forest for twelve years. Duryodhana, the eldest son of Dhritarastra, was very crooked. He was always trying to finish the Pandavas. Once Duryodhan invited Durvasa Muni to his home. Durvasa was always in an angry mood. If there was a little discrepancy in any way he would get angry and curse the offender. By his curse that person would be burnt to ashes. Duryodhana fed Durvasa with nice *prasāda*. Duryodhan then requested him, “Rishi, will you do one thing for me.”

Having received the nice food, Durvasa was satisfied with Duryodhan. So he said, “Yes, what do you want?”

“The Pandavas are living in the forest. Please go there with your thousands of disciples.

But you should go in the afternoon. Don’t go before then.”

“All right, I will do as you ask.” Durvasa said.

The plan behind it was that if Durvasa Muni went there in the afternoon with his thousands of disciples, and the Pandavas were not able to give him any food, then Durvasa would become angry, curse them, and they would be finished.

The Pandavas were living in the forest. For eating they were just collecting some fruits, roots, and leaves from the forest. Draupadi would cook every day. First she would serve her husbands, and if any guest came she also served them. Finally, only after serving everyone, Draupadi would take her food. Draupadi would then clean the cooking pots and put them aside. If any guest came after that, Draupadi would not be able to give them *prasāda*. As long as Draupadi had not taken her food, even if thousands of guests came she would be able to feed them. She had the power that her cooking pot would never be empty. It would always be full. She was also known as “Annapurna-devi”, because her pot was always full of *anna*, food. However, after Draupadi took her meal then that pot would be emptied and she would not be able to feed any guest who came.

Duryodhan told Durvasa, “Please go there in the afternoon.” That way Draupadi would have already taken her food so she would not be able to offer Durvasa and his disciples anything. Durvasa would get angry and curse them and the Pandavas would be finished.

Durvasa arrived in the afternoon with his thousands of disciples. Yudhisthir Maharaja is known as Dharmaraja — he very strictly follows the principles of dharma. He is a very nice gentleman and never speaks a lie. According to etiquette, if a guest comes a *grhastha* must give him food and take nice care of him. That is *grhastha-dharma*. So when Durvasa Muni arrived there with his thousands of disciples, out of etiquette Yudhisthir said, “Please go and take your bath. Come soon and we will serve you food.” Durvasa Muni went to the nearby stream with his thousands of followers and they began taking bath. Yudhisthir called out, “Draupadi, bring food!” In this way a problem arose for Draupadi — she could not

give any food because she had already taken her meal. Draupadi thought, “Now I am in great danger. How can I serve the guests? I cannot give any food now. Who will help me in this situation? Only Krishna can help me; no one else is there.” So she prayed piteously to Krishna to help. Krishna is everywhere, and he heard her prayer. If your prayer is sincere then Krishna can hear. Krishna was in Dwarka and he could hear Draupadi’s prayers.

Krishna ran breathlessly to where the Pandavas were, and from a distance started calling, “Draupadi! Draupadi! Draupadi! I am very hungry! Give me some food!”

When Krishna came nearer, Draupadi said, “Please listen to me. . . .”

“I won’t listen to anything. Please give me some food first, then I will listen.”

Draupadi had no food to give. She said, “I have this problem, Krishna. I have no food.”

“No, no, no. There must be something for me. Go and see, there must be some food.” But Draupadi had already cleaned the cooking pots.

That day Draupadi had cooked some leafy vegetables. She found one leaf stuck to the brim of the pot. Draupadi brought that cooking pot, and Krishna said, “Oh, yes! Food is here.” He took that one leaf, ate it, and drank

a glass of water. He became very satisfied, and said, “Draupadi, you gave me so much to eat. I am feeling drowsy. I must sleep now.”

Meanwhile, Durvasa Muni and his thousands of disciples were taking bath in the stream. Some of the disciples told Durvasa, “O Guru Maharaja! It is very wonderful that our belly has suddenly become so heavy that we cannot lift ourselves from the water.”

Durvasa said, “That is also the case with me.” Durvasa Muni then thought, “Oh! The Pandavas are *vaiṣṇavas*.” He remembered the incident that had previously taken place with Ambarish Maharaja and how the *sudarśana-cakra* came running after him. He thought, “Let us run away! Let’s not go there.”

Yudhishthir Maharaja thought, “Where are the guests? The sun is going to set. If I don’t entertain my guests before sunset then I will be an offender.” He said, “Sahadeva, go and see where the guests are.” Sahadeva went and saw that they were all running away.

In this way, Durvasa Muni and his thousands of followers were all satisfied because Krishna took only one leaf and was satisfied. This is *aham hi sarva-yajñānām bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca* — Krishna is the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices (Bg. 9.24). If someone satisfies Krishna, then automatically he will satisfy one and all.

(To be concluded in the next issue)

— Lecture on *Bhagavad-gītā* 9.24, New Vrindavan, 30 Oct 1990.

CONCENTRATED LISTENING

Nārada Purāṇa 1.1. 73-74

*naro yaḥ sat-kathā-madhye saṁbhāvām kurute ‘nyataḥ
sa yāti narakam ghoraṁ tad ekāgra-manā bhavet*

*śrotā vaktā ca viprendrā eṣa dharmāḥ sanātanaḥ
asamāhita-cittas tu na jānāti hi kiñcana*

One who carries on a conversation with others during a holy discourse about the Lord goes to a terrible hell. Hence, O leading *brāhmaṇas*, the speaker and the listener should both pay single-minded attention. This is the eternal path of righteousness. Without concentrating the mind one cannot understand anything. ❧

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